THE EARLY AMAZONS

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THE EARLY AMAZONS

Modern and Ancient Perspectives on a Persistent Myth

BY

JOSINE H. BLOK

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PREFACE

The aim of this study is twofold. In the first part I want to show that the Amazons are a myth. To some readers this claim will hardly come as a surprise. The recent interest in the creation of alterity and the detailed investigation of how Greek civilization shaped its alternatives in mythical representations have furthered an awareness of the Amazons as an emblem of Otherness in its many guises. Yet for many years, even centuries, the opposite view dominated the assessment of the ancient Amazon tales. This people of female warriors was generally held to have been rooted in reality, as the (once) living alternative to Western practices and values. Even if the explanations attached to the Amazons have been richly divergent in kind and aim, the assumption that they were or at least had been no figment of the imagination determined the discourse on these incredible women.

Classical scholarship from the late eighteenth century onwards partook in this idea. Either scholars offered explanations of their own, shaping what they held to be the core of Amazonian reality out of their professional views on mythical representation; or they abstained from any interpretation, shunning a theme that had been claimed by non-professionals as proof for processes in the socio-cultural history of mankind. In both ways they sustained the basic assumption about the Amazons, either trying to reconcile the irreconcilable or leaving this topic to rest as a skeleton in the closet of classical studies. The embarrassment resulting from these attitudes may explain why the Amazon myth has suffered a relative neglect by classical scholarship, compared to its profusion throughout Greek civilization.

In the process of coming to terms with the scholarly tradition on my subject, I saw that the alleged reality of the Amazons haunted even the most distinguished authors. This appeared to be not only the case in the early scholarship on the Amazons. Indeed, when starting this project in the late 1970s, I found that the theme could still embarrass a professional audience. Discussing the feasible ways to explain some problems in my research, the majority of my colleagues raised suggestions of the reality-kind (matriarchal residues? fertility-rites? initiation?), or made no suggestions at all. So even if in the meantime a shift has been gradually taking place, I think it worthwhile to offer an analysis of the discourse on the Amazons in classical scholarship. In brief, I want to show what obstacles have prevented professional critics from perceiving the Amazons as mythical in the very sense of the word. Moreover, the relative neglect concerns the archaic material in particular. The early Amazons probably seemed too close to the recesses of time, where visions of matriarchy or dim contours of foreign peoples resembling an Amazon society might seduce scholars away from the clarity of professional debate. Recently, the shift towards an interpretation of the Amazons as a mythical people has settled on the classical era, where the framework of alterity can best be revealed. This perspective is highly valuable, as it illuminates the development of ancient Greek Amazonology and its uses in political life. Yet it can shed hardly any light on the shape of the Amazons in early Greek culture, when they entered the stage of heroic myth. My investigation, then, concerns the early Amazons of classical scholarship and some recent views of the development of the Amazon myth. In this way I hope to clear the ground for a new approach to the early Amazons of ancient Greece.

After situating the Amazons more firmly in the realm of mythology, the second aim of the present study is to show how the myth developed in archaic Greece. Some questions may seem old ones, since the claim of the first part does not resolve the problem of how this myth may have emerged. Yet this question will be put and answered in a different way, and new questions will steer the analysis of the Amazon myth in another direction. As a myth, it consists of stories, narratives handed down in oral tradition, preserved in writing and in visual representations. The interconnection between both types of expression will be explored, but at the same time each has a dialectic of its own. Words and pictures create meaning in different ways, yet the understanding of the one was most likely informed by familiarity with the other.

The narrative aspect is analyzed in the framework of oral traditions. Recent research in this field has convinced me that the role of the Amazons in myth is the kind of motif operating within pre-existing, large-scale structures of oral story-telling. This approach makes it necessary to make a double move. The basic features of the Amazon motif should be disentangled from the larger structures in which it is incorporated. To catch the bare words which first brought the Amazons to life, as far as the extant sources allow us to do so, appears to be the most reliable way to start. An ensuing confrontation of the motif with its contexts makes it possible to understand both its formal aspects and its meaning. In this way we move from the basic words to larger themes and tales.

Homeric epic appears to be the earliest strand of story-telling in which the Amazons can be found. In the context of heroic values the role of the Amazons is as ambiguous as it is revealing. Both on the level of words and on the level of narrative structures, the Amazons are shown to embody an otherness to the set values of masculinity and femininity in epic-heroic life. As such they could be imbued later on with the meaning of ethnographic alterity. The story of Achilles and Penthesileia draws on the generic Amazon motif and brings its inherent conflicts to the fore. Heroic tales in the tradition of Troy then seem the most likely candidate for the emergence of the Amazon motif. To reach beyond that stratum and pursue an origin behind Homeric epic is impossible. The complicated relationship between the epic and historical reality impedes any solid conclusion about dates and backgrounds. Nevertheless, some ideas about the stage of origin within epic itself and about the impulses leading to the spreading of the motif are offered in the course of my argument.

Several observations can be made on the application of a motif. Apparently, the story-tellers wanted to apply it; they might have used a different motif. But they could only use a different motif if the alternative entailed the same message. In other words, formally the Amazon motif operates like all other motifs: as one of the many elements with which a tale is to be constructed. On the level of meaning, however, it has no obvious alternative. The Amazons bring an aspect to the heroic tale that other motifs do not. The (heroic) tale with the (Amazon) motif taken as a whole acquires its meaning from the interaction of its constitutive elements. The specific quality as female heroes which the Amazons are shown to possess both underscores and destabilizes the masculine heroic quality of the Greek heroes who face them. The Amazons possess this quality because the Greeks face them: without it, the Greeks would not face them at all. Thus Greeks and Amazons are locked together in the realm of heroism.

Taking the fundamental impact of epic heroism in the Amazon motif as a lead, one wonders why the Amazons are applied to the tales of Priamos and Bellerophontes. Neither of the two, though for different reasons, seems a likely figure to confront enemies of this kind. Why was the motif applied to them as well? The method adopted here makes a detour inevitable. The structures of the tales which shape the narrative *personae* of both Priamos and Bellerophontes have to be considered, at least in outline. Bellerophontes in particular requires a fairly extensive discussion, owing to the complicated and pluriform appearances of this hero. Yet without this analysis, it would be impossible to show why the role of the Amazons in his heroism is incongruous, even an anomaly. With this analysis, on the other hand, one may trace how the poet of the *Iliad* was probably the first one to stitch various tales about Bellerophontes together and to adorn them with the increasingly popular Amazons.

Detours are inevitable on our way anyway. It seems obvious that the merging of masculinity and femininity in the Amazons confuses the role and self-awareness of Greek males confronting them on the battlefield. Yet the ways in which the Amazonian paradox is felt to be confusing, and the exact nature of the tensions this implies, are not so easy to track down. The most prominent tale based on this paradox is that of Achilles and Penthesileia. As mentioned before, in this story the generic potential of the Amazon motif is realized more extensively. Yet even then the problem of Achilles' relation with the Amazon queen is kept in the dark. We catch only a glimpse through the slander by Thersites, punished by Achilles in a torment of anger. So it is by Thersites' words only that more light might be shed on what was actually so infuriating to Achilles. To grasp the meaning of the Amazon paradox in the heroic ethos as a whole, the reader is asked first to understand the meaning of Thersites. The theme of Thersites exemplifies an idea underlying the Amazon motif as well: many things are not what they seem to be, and if so, one had better not discover it.

If being an ancient Greek hero requires a conflict with Amazons, it is hardly surprising to find Herakles confronting these female warriors. Indeed, Herakles' Amazonomachy has often been discussed as the example par excellence of the Greek fight with the Amazons, in particular as his quest for the girdle of the Amazon queen came to be the hero's Ninth Labour. Yet the archaic material on Herakles and the Amazons points in quite a different direction. It is extant in visual material and as such it calls for a different handling than the literary record. The iconographical method follows a more strictly chronological line than has been the case with literary, epic material. The earliest representations of Amazonomachy are reputed to show Herakles' battle with the Amazons. In any case they belong to a class of visual material that is hard to identify. Moreover, instead of following a thematic course by arguing from the smallest possible units (words) to the larger structures (narrative), iconographical analysis rests on the construction of structural patterns modified in smaller units. To obtain an overview of the representation of Herakles and the Amazons, and to identify significant changes in these patterns, my analysis will deal with large quantities of iconographical material. Only the specific cases of the earliest renderings will be discussed in more detail, since they mark the beginning of the early Amazons in Greek art. Of these items, and of a few other specific cases, illustrations have been added to invoke the reader's judgement. I am indebted to the museums mentioned in the sections for the photographs and to H. Waterbolk for the drawings he kindly provided. For a more thorough assessment of the iconographical analysis offered here on the large-scale developments, the reader is invited to turn to D. von Bothmer's *Amazons in Greek Art* (Oxford 1957) and the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (*LIMC*), vol. I, s.v. Amazones and its accompanying volume of photographs. Both offer a magnificent collection of material, accessible by catalogue numbers referred to in the present study.

The presentation of the literary sources implies problems of a different kind. A much larger range of sources may be provided, but choices must be made on how to render the original language. In the main text, quotations from French and German scholars have been translated into English. Since some concepts of German Romantic thought in particular are hard to render effectively in any other language, the original is included in the footnotes. Ancient Greek texts are all offered in translation; as a rule, Peter Mason has compared my translations into Dutch with his own translations into English. I refer to the Translator's Note on this matter and on the transliteration of Greek (personal) names. The protagonists of this study appear as Amazons in the main text, and as [Amazones] in Greek quotations. In general, quotations in Greek are offered only if indispensable to the argument. They are rendered in transliteration, to allow those readers who are unfamiliar with the Greek alphabet to spot the main words under discussion. It is a general practice to render transliterations in cursive script, but to avoid the unintentional emphasis suggested by this kind of script, the Greek is rendered here between square brackets [ ]. The meaning of crucial Greek words and hence their translation into English are, of course, among the issues discussed in the main text. One word, though, may be singled out here. The Greek word [zoostèr] commonly designates the object the Amazon queen was supposed to wear and which was stolen from her by Herakles. The meaning attached to this object (discussed in chapter V) would have made the English word "belt" the most appropriate translation. However, since the traditional rendering in the secondary literature is "girdle", I have retained this word here as well; furthering a new tradition by replacing "girdle" with "belt" is more than I can wish for.

The interconnection between literary and visual material I hold to be an indispensable and enjoyable feature of cultural history. Yet each type of material is the object of highly specialized disciplinary discourse. I have tried to introduce the debates involved to the extent that seemed necessary to understand how my argument is situated within the issue as a whole. Specialists in the respective fields may find too little, and non-specialists too much to their liking, or even vice versa. This sensitivity, however, I hold to be the inevitable price to pay for an interdisciplinary approach.

The first version of this book was defended as a doctoral thesis at the University of Leiden in 1991. Systematic research has been terminated more or less in 1989, forced by the circumstances involved in this process. Some publications appearing after that date are discussed incidentally in the present study. Had my regular work at the University of Groningen allowed it, some of this recent work would have been incorporated more profoundly. The fact that, for example, the work of Rosalind Thomas on orality and literacy, and of François Lissarrague on the representation of hoplites in Attic vase-painting would have added to the depth of my argument, but do not appear to refute it, may serve as an insufficient excuse for this lacuna. Moreover, I have preferred to accept the invitation by the editors of this series to publish an English edition with minor alterations. Extensive references to newly published scholarship would not change my argument, while the publication of this book would have been postponed to a dim future. In this disputable way, the present study hopes to engage in a discussion beyond the confines of the Dutch language within the foreseeable future.

Groningen, November 1993

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present study is a revised version of my doctoral thesis. The process of research and composing it has entailed many years, witnessing the birth of my children before the birth of my book. Writing a doctoral thesis, indeed any work of scholarship, recalls the impact of Eroos: it is an act of love, but at times may be bittersweet.[1] The affectionate support of relatives and friends has meant as much to me as the professional help of many colleagues. Without forgetting any of the kind suggestions, bibliographical notices, considerate questions, patient compliance and personal encouragement, I want to single out those who have have been more to me and to this book than I can ever fully acknowledge.

My sisters and my brother have shown me a warmth I know to originate both in their own nature and in that of our parents. Moreover, my parents have supported me over the years with their typical generosity in all things material and immaterial.

From the first day she set foot in the History Department, Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg has been friend and colleague rolled into one. A few years my senior, she has shared with me her experience of being a mother and a professional historian, as our discussions ran smoothly from source criticism to child care and back again. She roused my interest in the meaning of orality to ancient culture, one among the many issues on which we have continued to exchange views until the present day.

Of the many scholars who have aided me with advice on particular questions, I owe a special debt to C.J. Ruijgh. Asked to assess my reading of the Homeric formula bearing on the Amazons, he has offered from his rich expertise a host of comments to improve my argument. I feel not the slightest hesitation to refer to his authority on matters of historical grammar

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[1] Ann Carson, *Eros the Bittersweet: An Essay*, Princeton 1985.

which far exceed my own knowledge. F.R. Ankersmit read a previous version of the first chapter and his critical questions stimulated me to sharpen my perceptions. Irina Diakonoff and Marianne Maaskant-Kleibrink have helped me to find my way in ancient iconography, steering me past errors along my autodidactic wanderings. It goes without saying that all shortcomings this book may still contain are due to my own.

Renate Schlesier was asked by the University of Leiden to pass her judgment on my thesis after it was finished. Her willingness to read my thesis in Dutch and her understanding of my argument, though put in a foreign language, have equally impressed me. Her sympathetic estimation of my work affected me as an a posteriori counsel, and I was informed of it when I needed it most. Our friendship after the defense of my thesis felt as something natural.

Peter Mason has done more than translating my thesis, Herculean labour though it was. As a classicist, an anthropologist and a friend, he has offered me his views along the way of adapting my text to standards of compactness. This is not the first book we have made together; I hope it won't be our last.

No one, however, has meant as much to the making of this study as Henk Versnel. To state that without him it would not have acquired its present form is not just a topos of academic gratitude, but true in every sense. When advised for the first time to turn to him as supervisor of my thesis, I stood too much in awe of his erudition to dare to do so. I could not have been more mistaken. Without ever imposing on me his superior knowledge and understanding of ancient Greek culture, but instead stimulating me to pursue and clarify my own arguments, his guidance has been as critical and exacting as it was sympathetic and supportive. To have gained a friend of his unique qualities, and to continue working together on new projects, has been an unexpected reward of my academic rite de passage.

My partnership with Wessel Krul has left many traces in this book, but its essence lies beyond any writing. With him, sharing the bittersweet turns into sharing the sweetness of life.

Groningen, November 1993

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from the Greek, Latin and Dutch are my own. Passages translated from ancient authors by Josine Blok for the Dutch-language version of this volume were cross-checked against the original text. I would like to thank Richard Scott (Leeds) for his assistance with the texts in nineteenth-century German.

As Richard Lattimore has remarked (in the glossary to one of the finest translations of the *Iliad*), it is a frequent, though not universal, practice to latinize Greek names, then anglicize the Latin forms, at least in pronunciation. Following his example, the practice of resorting to these Anglo-Latin forms has been avoided as far as possible in the present translation; where translations by other scholars are used, their spelling has been respected.

However, any attempt to achieve full consistency in this respect would be a Sisyphan enterprise. One of the reasons for this touches on one of the themes dealt with in the present work: the distance from [Achilleus] to Akhilleus, from Akhilleus to Achilleus, and from Achilleus to Achilles, is at the same time a measure of the distance separating us from *our* Greeks. And far be it from this translator to try to impose any protocol on *that* particular question.

Peter Mason
December 1993

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fragment of Attic terracotta relief, ca. 600 B.C.
Achilles with Gorgon shield; fragment of a figure on the ground.
Inscription (barely legible): AINIA
Drawing after Bothmer, *Amazons in Greek Art*, I, 3
(Penthesileia no. 2)

no. 2a
bronze reliefs on leather shield-strap; Argive, late 7th century B.C. From top to bottom: antithetic sphinxes, Achilles and Penthesileia, Herakles and the Lion, Theseus and the Minotauros, double lions.
Drawing after Kunze, *Archaische Schildbänder*, no. VI.
(Penthesileia no. 4)

no. 2b
bronze relief on leather shield-strap; Argive, second quarter of 6th century B.C. Duel of Achilles and Penthesileia.
Inscription: PEN
Drawing after Kunze, *Archaische Schildbänder*, no. XXXIIb.
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Duel of Achilles and Penthesileia.
Inscriptions: ACHILEUS, PENTHESILEA
On the reverse: Dionysos and Oinopion.
Courtesy, the Trustees of the British Museum.
(Penthesileia no. 1)

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votive shield found in Tiryns, ca. 700 B.C.
Generic Amazonomachy; on the reverse, hunting horse-man.
Detail: Amazonomachy, upper part.
Courtesy, Museum Nauplia.
(early Amazons no. 1)

no. 4b
votive shield found in Tiryns; ca. 700 B.C.
Amazonomachy: drawing after extant fragments.
(early Amazons no. 1)

no. 5
signet ring, from Mykenai, shaft grave III.
Drawing after Ahlberg, *Fighting on Land and Sea*, fig. 71.
Impression shows the gesture from left to right; cf. *CMS* I, no. 12, p. 23

no. 6
fragment of votive shield, from Samos, ca. 700 B.C.
Photograph after Eilmann, *AM* 1933, Beilage XXXVII
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Amazonomachy of Herakles and companions.
Inscriptions: ANDROMEDA, ALKINOA, AREXIMACHA (?), HERAKLES, IOLAOS, PASIMELON
Drawing after De Ridder, *RUM* 1896, and Brommer, *Herakles*, pl. 8.
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no. 8a
"Tyrrhenian" Attic black-figure neck amphora, by the Castellani Painter, second quarter of 6th century B.C.
Amazonomachy of Herakles and companions.
Detail: walled city with three towers; on the left, satyrs and maenads.
Courtesy, Museo Archeologico Etrusco, Florence.

no. 8b
"Tyrrhenian" Attic black-figure neck amphora, by the Castellani Painter, second quarter of 6th century B.C.
Amazonomachy of Herakles and companions.
Detail: duel of Herakles and Amazon.

no. 9
Attic black-figure amphora, namepiece of the Timiades Painter, ca. 570–560 B.C.
Side A: Herakles and Greeks fighting Amazons; side B: dancing men between two swans.
Detail: duel of Herakles and Amazon.
Inscriptions: TIMIADES, PANTARISTE, HERAKLES, ANDROMACHE, TELAMON, AINIPE.
H.L. Pierce Fund; courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

PART ONE

Interpretations of the Amazon Myth in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

“.. ‘Genau genommen kann man sagen, es sei nur ein Augenblick, in welchem der schöne Mensch schön sei.’ Merkwürdiger Satz. .. Denn dein Aperçu passt ja eigentlich so recht nur aufs Männlich-Vormännliche, auf den im Marmor nur haltbaren Schönheitsmoments des Jünglings. Was gilts, du hattest das gute Glück, das ‘der Mensch’ ein masculinum ist, und dass du also die Schönheit masculinisieren mochtest nach Herzenslust. Mir erschien sie in Jugend-, in Frauengestalt. .”.

Goethe on Winckelmann, in Thomas Mann, *Lotte in Weimar. Gesammelte Werke,* Frankfurt a. Main 1960, 1974, XIII vols., vol. II, p. 681.

INTRODUCTION

THE AMAZONS: THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN IMAGE

The Amazons occupy a singular place in Greek culture. Practically every genre of tradition and literature testifies to the fact that many stories were in circulation on these warriorlike women. Some writers provided their account with a wealth of detail, and sometimes even with an emotional charge. Others confined their remarks to a brief mention, since the Amazons were taken to be familiar figures. The frequency with which these belligerent women were visually represented also gives an impression of the important role played by the Amazons in the Greek imagination. Perhaps it is no exaggeration to state that the Amazon myth is an essential component of the image of the Greeks that has come down to us.[1]

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed various attempts to arrange, summarize and interpret the copious and highly diversified source material bearing on this myth. The portrait of the Amazons that emerges from these studies may not be attractive in every way, but it is no less fascinating for that. It is an image of a people that consists mainly or even exclusively of women. These women were accustomed to bear arms, ride on horseback, hunt and plunder. The Amazons thus had no need of men to wage war—the masculine function *par excellence* in ancient society. Men were only required for purposes of propagation if the Amazons were not to die out as a people. The lifestyle of the Amazons was geared to fighting; they removed one of their breasts so that they could use their bows without hindrance, and they bred horses to ensure a supply of fast steeds. If they gave birth to children, girls received full privileges, while boys were killed, given away, mutilated or kept in servility. Control of the social and political organization—a masculine function among the Greeks and other peoples—was in the hands of women too. The Amazons were led by a queen, who surpassed the others in martial prowess and who wore a girdle as a sign of her superiority. This fearsome and exceptional people lived north-east of present-day Anatolia near the river Thermodon, in a city called Themiskyra, but their presence was also attested in Libya, Thrake and the western coast of Asia Minor. Using these peripheral areas as their base of operations, they raided the Greek world, fought with Greek heroes, and their role as allies of the Trojans and enemies of the Achaian army was recorded in epic. On the whole, the history of the Amazons was a bloody one, characterized by disputes with the neighbouring Greeks. Time and again they seemed to have been dealt with for good, but in the era of Alexandros the Great they reappeared in a different guise, when the Amazon queen Thalestris approached Alexandros with a proposal to produce a matchless offspring together. The Makedonian king willingly complied. Other traditions indicate that the Amazons were not only conspicuous for their martial exploits. In particular, many Greek cities in Asia Minor owed their name to the Amazons. These eponymous stories, no matter how vague or concise they were, did not usually attribute the decisive importance of the Amazons in the early history of their city to a fatal action in war; they associated the eponymous Amazons with the city by virtue of a tomb in which the Amazon was traditionally believed to lie, for example, or because of a shrine that she was supposed to have founded; sometimes the nature of the association was not specified at all.

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[1] R. Flacelière and P. Devambez, *Héraclès, images et récits*, Paris 1966, p. 88.

No one who examines this portrait and pays attention to the details it contains can fail to notice the inconsistencies. Was the Greek world really confronted by Amazons from different sides, or had this mobile people rapidly moved from the North to the South-West via the East? What was the attitude of the Amazons toward men—were they always bent on fighting and subduing them, or did they value their company? Were the Amazons preoccupied with attacking the Greeks, or did they also live a life in which their own society occupied pride of place and limit their contacts to their immediate, barbarous neighbours? How is the hostile role of the Amazons in the stories of combat to be reconciled with the eponymous traditions in which they exercised a protective, virtually cultic function? Did the Amazons actually exist, as the Greeks were firmly convinced, or should another meaning be assigned to the existence of the Amazons? In other words, did the Amazons constitute the unique community described in the Greek traditions, or do the latter present us with the kaleidoscopic projections of the imagination?

Many a time have such questions been raised in academic and non-academic publications. However, the scholarly debate is not centred on these issues, but on a more general and fundamental problem: how are we to determine the relation between two inconsistent mythical data? How are we to distinguish between fact and fiction in this myth? What is the relation between myth and historical reality in general, and how can we understand the Amazon myth in the light of a general theory of myth? The interpretation of the Amazon myth therefore leads us directly to the study of myth as a scientific discipline[2] which indicates which questions arise and how they are to be formulated, as well as how they are to be answered. Since the first chapter of the present study focuses on this question of interpretation, it is apposite to indicate some of the reasons for paying so much attention to this issue.

Although all scholars take into account the views which have been developed within their own discipline, they still strive for a reading of the ancient material which is free of others' perceptions. It is usually an experience of this kind which prompts them to offer a new interpretation. Nevertheless, it is impossible for an individual reaction to the material to be genuinely free of interference. Academic commentaries, embedded as constituent elements in a broad cultural tradition, always influence the thinking of anyone who conducts research on antiquity. This applies to the study of ancient mythology too, and thus to the Amazon myth. Anyone who has heard of the "Amazons" will tend to think in terms of the scholarly (re)constructions rather than of the ancient references. When faced with the Greek testimonia on the Amazons, ancient historians too view them primarily in the light of the authoritative debate on the Amazon myth. More than other myths, the myth of the Amazons evokes associations which have more to do with modern interpretations than with what the Greek themselves thought.

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[2] Mythology is commonly understood as the corpus of mythical stories of a culture, and the scientific discipline which interprets these stories. Mythography refers to the activity of those who recorded these myths, in the present case in classical antiquity. One disadvantage of this terminology is that it implies an over-rigid division of labour between the recording of a myth and its interpretation. In the present work, "mythology" is used to refer to the corpus of myths and their interpretations deriving from antiquity, while "the study of myth" is used to refer to the scholarly study of this tradition in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In the nineteenth century, the Amazons were generally taken to be historical figures. Despite differences on the nature of this historical reality from one scholar to another and from one school of thought to another, most texts of this period contain the idea that Amazon-like women really did exist. What is even more striking is the continuity of this view. Although a new approach to the study of myth was initiated in the 1890s which replaced the emphasis on historical origins with a completely different framework of interpretation, the Amazons retained their role as personages of the past. It is only recently that this tradition has been abandoned in some publications based on structuralism, but they have exerted little influence outside a small circle of specialists. Any fresh analysis of the myth therefore has to tackle this familiar historicizing view of the Amazons.

This image of the Amazons is the result of the development of historiography and the study of mythology as scientific disciplines since the end of the eighteenth century. During this process, history and myth were defined, and rules were formulated for the discussion of these segments of culture in academic terms. The Amazon myth now raised a special problem for scholars: how were the ancient references to this people of autonomous women to be understood in an academic debate which regarded individual males as the agents of culture? The interpretations of the Amazon myth appear to situate these women at the point of intersection of history and mythology.

Based on the assumption that, in the first and last instance, the interpretation of the Amazon myth is dependent on the modern discussion of this myth, Chapter I reviews some representative interpretations of the Amazon myth from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. My treatment of these interpretations is intended to show how the view of the Amazons as extraordinary figures was created and to reveal the perceptions of myth and history on which they are based. Each of these interpretations is typical of a particular tendency in the study of myth, and each of these tendencies in turn can be set against a wider intellectual background. The development of the study of myth has been carefully analysed in a number of recent publications.[3] Generally speaking, it may be claimed that the source of myth has been located somewhere between the creative, autonomous capacity of the human mind, on the one hand, and the influence of external, social or historical factors, on the other. Since this dichotomous view of myth has essentially affected the image of the Amazons, it must be subjected to further analysis. Moreover, this treatment of the various positions on myth also serves to indicate why the second part of this study is not based on premises of this kind. Instead of opting *a priori* for history, human mental structures or ritual as the ultimate source of the myth, I shall stress the narrative character of the Amazon motif. This approach is intrinsically connected with the important function played by archaic Greek oral traditions in the development of myth. My analysis of the literary material is thus substantially based on research on these traditions. The interpretation of the visual material is influenced by recent views of the function of the relevant artefacts and of their relation to the narrative tradition.[4] In the second instance I shall make use of various theories, including some pertinent to the study of myth.

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[3] H.A. Murray, ed., *Myth and Mythmaking*, New York/Boston 1960, 1968²; R. Dorson, *The British Folklorists*, London 1968; G.S. Kirk, *Myth. Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and other Cultures*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1970; G.S. Kirk, *The Nature of Greek Myths*, Harmondsworth 1974; J.-P. Vernant, "Raisons du mythe", in *Mythe et Société en Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1974, pp. 195–250; H. Gockel, "Mythologie als Ontologie", in H. Koopmann, ed., *Mythos und Mythologie in der Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts.*, Frankfurt am Main, 1979; W. Burkert, "Griechische Mythologie und die Geistesgeschichte der Moderne", in O. Reverdin and B. Grange, eds., *Les études classiques aux XIXe et XXe siècles: leur place dans l'histoire des idées*, Vandoeuvres-Genève 1980, pp. 159–207; A. Momigliano, "K.O. Müller's *Prolegomena zu einer Wissenschaftlichen Mythologie* and the Meaning of 'Myth'", in *ANSP* s. III, vol. XIII, 1983, pp. 671–689; W.G. Doty, *Mythography. The Study of Myths and Rituals*, Alabama 1986; I. Strenski, *Four Theories of Myth in Twentieth-Century History. Cassirer, Eliade, Lévi-Strauss and Malinowski*, Basingstoke/London 1987; L. Edmunds, ed., *Approaches to Greek Myths*, Baltimore/London 1990; H.S. Versnel, "What is Sauce for the Goose is Sauce for the Gander: Myth and Ritual, Old and New", in *Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual, Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion 2*, Leiden 1993, pp. 15–88.

[4] For a representative treatment see A.M. Snodgrass, *An Archaeology of Greece. The Present State and Future Scope of a Discipline*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1987, esp. Ch. 5, "The First Figure-scenes in Greek Art", pp. 132–169, which contains an extensive discussion of the structuralist approach to archaic artefacts.

Before proceeding to examine the interpretations of the Amazon myth, though, I shall first explain the framework in which they are analysed, since some knowledge of the dominant views of history and mythology in the periods concerned is required for an understanding of the specific interpretations of the Amazon myth that were advanced.[5]

The study of myth, history and language in the nineteenth century

What had been an antiquarian or philosophical approach to the (ancient) past came to assume the form of a discussion which is now characterized as the beginning of the discipline of history.[6] This change was very closely connected with the rise of historicism as the dominant approach to history.[7] Historical consciousness, and the discipline of history whose field of inquiry was premised on this consciousness, set the tone in the humanities. In its own way, the study of myth conformed to the same point of view. This was a time in which historical variety was attracting attention and in which the past was viewed as something essentially different from the present.[8] Among historians—who saw antiquity as the natural starting-point of history—opinions differed on the nature of the historical object and on how it was to be approached from contemporary culture.

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[5] I have deliberately excluded references to the specialist literature on this theme, which would exceed the bounds of the present discussion.

[6] For this reason, A.D. Momigliano, "Gibbon's Contribution to Historical Method", in *Studies in Historiography*, London 1966², pp. 40–55 regards E. Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788) as the "take off" of the academic discussion as far as ancient history is concerned.

[7] There is a concise account of the various meanings attributed to the term "historicism" in F.R. Ankersmit, *Denken over geschiedenis. Een overzicht van moderne geschiedfilosofische opvattingen*, Groningen 1984, pp. 169ff., 172ff. Following Ankersmit, I take historicism to be the view that the historian must understand the past from the past itself; the related hermeneutic principle that the historian must empathize with the historical agent in order to grasp the historical object; and the notion that an object of study is to be understood in terms of its history or its position within a historical evolution. This assumption of the processual character of history can lead to the historicizing of processes encompassing the whole of world history, the so-called speculative systems. From the appearances of historicism in various guises in the following pages the difference between the "speculative" and the "scientific" should emerge. The study of myth in particular appealed to the speculative side of historicism to a much greater degree than historiography proper.

[8] By contrast, in the seventeenth century people and law were studied on the basis of logical reasoning, abstracted from historical circumstances as much as possible; and Enlightenment historiography emphasized human universals and investigated them within the perspective of a linear evolution.

This new insight into the variety of the historical process and the distinction between the present and the past raises questions for the ways in which historians could obtain knowledge of the past and transmit it to a (reading) public. The tension between the pluriformity of the past, on the one hand, and the need to assume a certain degree of unity if the other culture was to be understood at all, on the other, remained a key problem in this historiography.[9] The changing historiographical debate was based not only on a new historical consciousness, but also on the methodological issues which this consciousness entailed. This friction was accommodated as far as possible by a strict evaluation of the historical source, a specific view of the historical text, and the assumption of a congruence between the historian and the historical agent. It is the last of these closely intertwined factors which will primarily concern us here.

A critical appraisal of the sources, through utilization and refinement of the traditional methods of textual criticism, was a prerequisite for any scrutiny of the reliability of the material. The contradictions in the sources could then be counterbalanced by the construction of an underlying, unambiguous reality. This historical reality was not just considered as a datum that could be attained with a clear sense of conviction; it was also possible to represent this reality faithfully. In this respect, the writing of history resembled the creation of a scale model of the past, and the text was taken to be transparent, offering an immediate view of the past.[10] Finally, historical figures were regarded as deliberately acting, ultimately rational beings. This assumption was required if a coherent picture of the past was to be constructed. This procedure, in which reconstruction and explanation were very close to one another, assumed a relatively direct analogy between the historian and the historical agent, since the discourse of the former was supposed to present the actions of the latter in a meaningful and rational process. This hermeneutic procedure by which knowledge of the past was created was thus based on an essential equivalence between historian and historical agent, while the knowledge itself—the reconstructed image of the past—provided an account of the difference between the historical culture and the present.

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[9] "The difficulty here [. . .] is that the re-enactment procedure transfers only the time*less* idea to the present and not an act of thinking which *is* situated in the past." F.R. Ankersmit, *The Reality Effect in the Writing of History; the Dynamics of Historiographical Topology*, Amsterdam/New York 1989, p. 16.

[10] For this formulation and a concise discussion of these historiographical premises and their consequences, see Ankersmit, *The Reality Effect*, pp. 6–10.

The notion of "difference" plays a complicated role in this view of the writing of history. The assumption of a difference between past and present was an essential part of the definition of history. This difference could be overcome and utilized by means of the methodological principles outlined above, because it was sustained by the correspondence between the historical agent and the historian. While no one doubted that the historical picture contained objective truth, it was fully admitted that this picture was the result of the mental activity of the historian—which raised the question of the extent to which the image of history was a reflection of the historian's own processes of thought.

We can distinguish two aspects which are relevant for the arguments advanced in the present study. The first is the fact that the historian selects from the totality of the shapeless past, delineating a field of historical significance. Any *historia rerum gestarum* is preceded by a selection from the entirety of *res gestae*. The resulting selection—which is thus not the same as the whole of the past—is what can be called the *significant past*, the referent of the writing of history which is conventionally understood by the term "history". Historicism was governed by the assumption that this significant past itself makes the various *historiae* possible; that they are a potential product of the significant past; and that the historian acts as mediator in this process of realization. The current upsurge of interest in historical narrativism, on the other hand, involves a shift of emphasis: now it is the *historiae* which produce the significant past; the historians who tells the story and the tradition in which they operate create the historical object. Despite this difference of emphasis, however, the main conclusion remains that the writing of history creates a distinction between the past and the significant past, and that this was, of course, just as true of the period in question.[11] The

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[11] Of course, each culture creates its own view of history in this way, as a demarcation of the past which comes under consideration for the attribution

significant past, or history, could be divided into a number of segments in terms of periodization, thematization, etc.; while what lay beyond these confines was a past without significance, either because it did not impinge on the lines of development which were considered relevant for the writing of history, or because its essential characteristic was regarded as impervious to reconstruction or rational argument.

The second aspect concerns the nature of the past and the significant past, which it is difficult to demarcate from one another with precision. Given the general historicizing tendency, the distinction was situated in time in the first instance. From this perspective, the past preceded history. Seen in the light of the Enlightenment theories of the development of civilized society, the past could be understood as the natural state of humanity before the process of civilization had been initiated in the fields of language, religion or the elementary formation of a polity.[12] However, the past could also be taken to be synchronic with history though beyond the purview of actual historical processes. This latter conception gained ground in the second half of the nineteenth century under the influence of evolutionism and the search for contemporary survivals of early forms of civilization.[13]

Besides these attempts to distinguish between the past and history in chronological terms, efforts were also made to distinguish them in terms of content. This may be regarded as the most important aspect, from which the chronological distinction is derived, as the case of evolutionism illustrates. In some respects the historiography of the late eighteenth century represented a continuation of the traditional division by themes. The historical terrain was thus defined by the formation of the State, predominantly in relation to dynastic issues, the development of

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of significance. My remarks are confined *grosso modo* to the West European historiographical variant dating from the end of the eighteenth century. On the problem of culturally determined views of history see J. Fabian, *Time and the Other. How Anthropology Makes its Object*, New York 1983, and E. Tonkin, M. MacDonald, and M. Chapman, eds., *History and Ethnicity*, London/New York 1989.

[12] There is a clear survey of these different forms of the history of civilization in P.P. Gossiaux, "Séquence de l'histoire dans l'anthropologie des Lumières, problèmes et mythes", in B. Rupp-Ehrenreich, ed., *Histoires de l'anthropologie: XVI–XIX siècles*, Paris 1984, pp. 67–85.

[13] For the relation between ethnography and history from this perspective see G. Stocking Jr., *Victorian Anthropology*, London 1987.

law and of religion. However, the frameworks of interpretation were gradually extended, with a corresponding modification in the notion of the significant past. This new view of the significant past can best be understood as a reflection of the public domain as it was conceived in social debates from the second half of the eighteenth century on.[14] The public domain was a political arena based no longer on traditional, dynastic sovereignty but on a new representation of (republican) citizenship. This was a rational, abstract idea, which was not necessarily embodied in specific bearers of sovereignty. The question of who was to embody this citizenship was in principle still open, so that the specific attribution of this citizenship was the subject of debate and conflict. Historians were faced with the same dilemma: the main agents of history were those who had contributed to the development of the public domain, whether they were to be found among the aristocracy, bourgeoisie or common people.

Once it is accepted that the projection of the public domain was the leit-motiv of historiography at the time, the variety which characterized the historical process had to be recognized as well. We can therefore attempt to determine the most important aspects of the significant past and the past in more detail:

significant past	**past**
variety	uniformity
change	immutability
culture	nature
political	social
citizenship	physicality[15]
rationality	irrationality, emotions
humanity	gendered difference
masculinity	femininity

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[14] See the analysis of J. Habermas' theories and of the relation of women to this political domain in J. B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, Ithaca 1988. Cf. also J.W. Scott, "French Feminists and the Rights of 'Man': Olympe de Gouges's Declarations", *History Workshop Journal* 28, pp. 1–21. For a discussion of the significance of the public domain for the writing of women's history, see my "Sexual Asymmetry: A Historiographical Essay", in J. Blok and P. Mason, eds., *Sexual Asymmetry. Studies in Ancient Society*, Amsterdam 1987, pp. 1–57.

[15] Women were latent in the abstract formulation of both "citizenship" and "humanity", but as soon as women actually demanded recognition of the fact, as they were to do during the French Revolution and in the course of

The left-hand column should also include "public domain", but we cannot simply write "private domain" as the corresponding term in the right-hand column: every aspect in the left-hand column is a part of the representation of the public domain in the writing of history, while the right-hand column is its opposite. Moreover, this way of presenting the material in two columns is in danger of distorting the nature of the historical debate, which focused precisely on the relation between the various elements. It was concerned with the question of whether the categories were mutually exclusive, or whether it was possible to subordinate and include the categories in the right-hand column in those of the left-hand column. In the rational liberal view of history, the main distinction was between the political and the social domain, between culture and nature;[16] the non-significant past was external to these domains and was associated with factors like the emotions, irrationality, physicality and sexuality to the extent that they had not been caught up in the civilising process. The Romantic view, on the other hand, tried to establish a much closer relation between the various components or emphasized the categories in the right-hand column.

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the nineteenth century, the specific meaning of these abstract terms was made explicit: "citizen" and "human being" were to be understood as "male citizen" and "man" respectively. This tension between formulation and intention was explicitly confirmed in the Netherlands when the Supreme Council decided on Aletta Jacobs' request to be included on the list of registered voters in 1883: the letter of the law did not exclude women, but they could not be regarded as citizens in the spirit of the law. Four years later the epithet "male" was added to the sections of the Dutch constitution bearing on the right to vote. The argument that was usually adduced during the French Revolution to justify this interpretation of the universal category "human being" was connected with the notion of femininity as a predominantly physical form of existence. Maternity, the physical fulfilment of femininity *par excellence*, was taken to exclude the spiritual freedom which was necessity for "citizenship". As a gendered being, a woman was excluded from the political domain and from history. Arguments for this connection between the idea of "citizenship" and physicality were advanced by various individuals, including the philosophers J.-J. Rousseau and I. Kant. These definitions alone already indicate the opposition between citizenship and physicality, rationality and emotion, humanity and gender difference. See too Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere*; Scott, "French Feminists and the Rights of 'Man'"; C. Fauré, *Democracy without Women. Feminism and the Rise of Liberal Individualism in France*, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1991 (orig. Paris 1985), Chs. IV–VI.

[16] On the consequences of this demarcation for women's history, see e.g. G. Pomata, "La storia delle donne: una questione di confine", *Il mondo contemporaneo* X, 1983, pp. 1434–1469.

These brief remarks indicate how closely the demarcation of history was connected with representations of gender. In the course of the eighteenth century the idea of nature was increasingly identified as femininity.[17] "Woman" was more and more regarded as being fulfilled by Nature, her nature as a female being.[18] The female body became the foundation for a definition of women's minds as feminine,[19] while men were defined on the basis of spiritual qualities in abstract terms which bore no relation to their physicality. In other words, the emotional value attached to nature and femininity from the eighteenth century on was accompanied by a philosophical and historical conception of humanity in which men were represented and distinguished from femininity. In the course of the nineteenth century this way of seeing things became more and more influential. Since history was defined in contradistinction to this natural, social past, the category of women could not be a part of history; nor could women, as physical and social beings, be a part of the political domain or the contemporary body politic. Vice versa, the characteristics which were attributed to the natural past were given a feminine connotation: the past stood for uniformity, immutability, and even for a conflict-free condition of life.[20] The concepts of history, as distinct from the past, and citizenship, as distinct from the private domain, physicality and the emotions, were fundamentally determined by notions of gender.

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[17] For a good introduction to the debate on the Enlightenment and the idea of woman/nature see M. Bloch and J.H. Bloch, "Women and the Dialectics of Nature in Eighteenth-Century French Thought", in C. MacCormack and M. Strathern, eds., *Nature, Culture and Gender*, Cambridge etc. 1980.

[18] In Christian theology, a woman's soul had the same chance of grace as a man's soul; this gender-neutral domain disappeared with the philosophical reinterpretation of the notion of the human being. See D. Riley, *"Am I that Name?" Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History*, London 1988, Chs. 2 and 3.

[19] In connection with Michelet as a historian, see L. Jordanova, *Sexual Visions. Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, New York/London 1989, Ch. 4.

[20] L. Gossman, "The Go-between: Jules Michelet 1798–1874", in *Modern Language Notes* 1974, pp. 503–541, on Michelet's ambivalence *vis-à-vis* the past as the era of the mother; idem, *The Empire Unpossess'd. An Essay on Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, Cambridge/London 1981, describes Gibbon's representation of history as "The plenitude of paternal power" (Ch. 2), while a utopian world was supposed to lie outside the domain of history, characterized by stability, harmony and immutability (Ch. 3). This view of history and the past makes it easier to understand why nineteenth-century socio-political utopias treated women as the ones who would realize the desired future; Riley, *"Am I that Name?"*, pp. 47ff. On the incompatibility of "women" and "history" in the nineteenth century, cf. Chr. Crosby, *The Ends of History. Victorians and the "Woman Question"*, London 1991.

Although historians in this period viewed history as a reflection of their own lives as male citizens, they still tried to situate femininity somewhere. Given the male definition of history, femininity could only be located in an exceptional, non-historical domain: uniformity, nature, physicality, emotions, non-rationality, immutability. At the same time, these attributes of the feminine domain that was no part of history display striking points of contact with the domain of myth.

Although research on Greek mythology had originally occupied a position among studies of Greek language and literature and of Greek history and the history of Greek religion, at the beginning of the nineteenth century the study of myth had moved to the centre of attention, especially in Germany.[21] In the heated debate conducted there on Enlightenment views of history and High Romanticism, the idea of myth formed the battleground of this academic dispute. Although classically trained students of mythology also made use of archaeological material in their work, the main sources were still written ones, and it is here that the similarities and differences between the study of myth and the writing of history are most clearly revealed. Thus both historians and students of myth accepted the principle of source criticism. As long as research was confined to the study of the development of a specific myth in ancient civilization, no special problems arose, so that one is justified in referring to this form of the study of myth as mythography. However, once the question emerged of the nature, definition and meaning of myth, the idea of the ultimate reliability of the sources was relegated to the background. The written sources were no more than a superficial stratum, while the essence of myth was situated much deeper. It is at this point that a distinction arises between mythography and the study of myth. The difference between historiography and research of this kind no longer lay in the different degree of textual reliability, but it was of a much more radical kind: historians and students of myth now had differing conceptions of the *referent* of the texts. Of course, the past—

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[21] This explains the prominence accorded to German scholars in the present study.

regarded as people, actions, events and coincidences—is not identical with the sources which report it, and in this respect the consultation of sources always involves the substitution of one type of phenomena (words) for others (people, actions). All the same, this act of replacement was simplified and facilitated by the conception of history described above and by confidence in the self-awareness and rationality of historical agents. In the study of mythology, on the other hand, such a view was insufficient and inappropriate.

Myths are rarely taken to be rational products. It is certainly possible to discuss them rationally, and the corpus of myths of a specific culture is generally taken to display some kind of internal logic. Myth itself, however, has always been regarded as of a different nature from rationality in the strict sense. An important current within the study of myth took this mythical quality to be the result of human inability to translate important experiences into rational discourse. For instance, Chr.G. Heyne (1729–1812) regarded myth as the poetic precursor of genuine historical reporting, while Max Müller (1823–1900) took the mythical narrative and the predilection for symbolism to be the consequence of the chasm separating language from experience. Others, such as K.O. Müller (1797–1840), J.G. Frazer (1854–1941) and J.E. Harrison (1850–1928) treated the capacity to create myth as a human quality with a value and meaning of its own. Frazer and Harrison are among the founders of the "myth and ritual" approach, which regarded the ritual expression of elementary human experiences as a creative cultural ability. An important advantage of this recognition of the creativity of myth lies in the possibility of following the mythopoeic process in a manner analogous to historical reconstruction. The concept is then the result of empathy with the agents of history, though based on the mythopoeic faculty instead of on rationality.[22] No matter how the mythic capacity was interpreted and evaluated, its source was situated in the human psyche behind the forecastle of conscious, articulated rationality.

This non-rational mythical source or core, related to the deepest emotions and probably innate, represented the unity behind the welter of mythic narratives and their historical transformations. As an element of the psychical nature of human beings, this mythical core was universal, immutable and ahistorical. The mythical narratives it produced unquestionably had a social significance, because they furnished those who shared the story with a feeling of belonging together. Seen in these terms, the object of the study of myth implied a definition of difference, viz. the difference between the mythical content and its historical form. The combination of this definition with that of the difference between the past and history resulted in various conceptions and consequences.

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[22] K.O. Müller regarded the mythopoeic faculty as innate in all humans, but more active and manifest in some periods than in others.

The choice of whether to emphasize the historical aspect of myth or its irrational, ahistorical side depended to a large extent on specific scientific conceptions. If the core of myth was taken to be essentially irrational, it could be associated with the past. Taken to extremes, this implied that the moment of the creation of myth and thus the world in which this mythopoesis took place had to be situated before history. The line dividing rationality from irrationality was conceived chronologically as the boundary between history and the past. Vice versa, myth could provide insight into the world that lay beyond history and the previously undiscovered origins of civilization. Myth thus gave access to the unity which the principle of historical variety had excluded—an idea that was worked out by Fr. Creuzer (1771–1858). Furthermore, this point of view was widely used in the speculative systems of history, which were often formulated as a critique of current views of history. A well-known idealist version of such a system is J.J. Bachofen's *Das Mutterrecht* (1861);[23] Fr. Engels adapted the same argument to his materialist principles in *Die Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats* (1884).[24] The Amazons play an important role in both of these works.

The other extreme is illustrated, as far as the Amazon myth is concerned, by the work of A. Klügmann (1870 and 1875). In this variant, mythography was developed in its most positivist form, as far removed as possible from the irrational core. This represents an attempt to provide a scale model of the historical development of the myth, with mythography entirely subordinated to the central historiographical themes.

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[23] Cf. U. Wesel, *Der Mythos vom Matriarchat. Ueber Bachofens Mutterrecht und der Stellung von Frauen in frühen Gesellschaften vor der Entstehung der staatliche Herrschaft*, Frankfurt am Main 1980; L. Gossman, *Orpheus Philologus: Bachofen versus Mommsen on the Study of Antiquity*, *TAPS* 73, 5. Philadelphia 1985; S. Georgoudi, "Bachofen, il matriarcato e il mondo antico: riflessioni sulla creazione di un mito", in P. Schmitt-Pantel, ed., *Storia delle donne in occidente. L' Antichità*, Bari 1990, pp. 518–536.

[24] On the connection between both authors on this subject, cf. W. Nippel, *Griechen, Barbaren und "Wilde"*, Frankfurt am Main, 1990, pp. 79ff.

Of course, not every participant in the debate adopted such an extreme position. It was possible to emphasize the historical component of myth, viz. the transformations displayed by the mythical stories over time, while retaining the idea of a non-historical core as an essential part of the very definition of myth. However, the place and meaning of this core with regard to this historical aspect had to be redefined. The core was taken to lie under the surface of history and to exert an influence there in a special way, so that transformations in the myths were partly determined by different factors than those which were at work in the "regular" process of history. This attempt to reach a compromise between the two extremes is to be found in the work of K.O. Müller.

In comparing the study of myth with the writing of history, it is also worth considering the nature of the scholarly dispute itself. Naturally enough, despite the existence of certain shared assumptions, each historian who was involved in the historiographical discussions held his own interpretation to be the correct one. In the case of the study of myth there is a much more fundamental difference. As pointed out by various scholars,[25] every prominent student or school of mythology claimed an exclusive insight into the nature of myth and rejected all previous views as incorrect. In this respect, the history of the study of myth resembles a constant rise and fall of different speculative systems, analogous to the development of such systems by Hegel, Marx and Spengler. On the one hand, then, we have the great devisers of universal systems (followed by those adherents who more or less formed a school); and on the other, the endless production of mythological reference works and lexicons, containing little more than lists and summaries of ancient myths without any attempt at interpretation. Whereas it is certainly not common practice for historians to define the concept of "history" in every monograph (on the contrary, it is usually partly or wholly neglected, except in publications which address this particular question), practically every student of myth felt the need to provide a complete definition of myth before getting down to specific investigation. Perhaps the greater speculative range involved in these studies of myth is due to the assumption that myth is a *sui generis* form of expression which differs essentially from rationalism, thereby becoming a research topic that was particularly attractive to Romantic scholars.

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[25] See esp. Kirk, *The Nature of Greek Myths*, and Strenski, *Four Theories of Myth*.

None of the definitions of myth which were advanced managed to convince scholars for more than a decade or so. A renewed attempt to bridge the gap between myth and reason was launched by twentieth-century scholars who wanted to give the structure of the pre-rational a coherent place in their theory of culture: S. Freud, C.G. Jung and Cl. Lévi-Strauss. Each of these theoreticians has put forward elaborate arguments bearing on the mythical core and on the relation between myth and reason. Yet, once again, none of these theories has managed to convince the scholarly community at large for long. The very fact that these systems function independently of one another is itself an indication of the impossibility of arriving at a consensus in the study of myth. In the writing of history, by contrast, we can note modifications to the border between history and the past (analogous to the border between the irrational core and the historical aspect of myth) since the end of the eighteenth century. The most important changes concern the development of socio-economic themes which have considerably widened the concept of the public domain and the rise of the history of mentality and cultural history. In all these cases, though, the process has been a gradual one, and one produced through the efforts of a large number of scholars. In other words, in surveying the development of historiography over a span of some two centuries, one can detect the presence of three more or less paradigmatic changes, none of which entirely supplanted its predecessors; instead, they called earlier theories into question under the influence of new themes which developed beside the old ones. The history of the study of myth over the same period, on the other hand, reveals a mass of theories, each of which claimed to have fully replaced its predecessors.

Myths contain such evident idiosyncratic elements, such as the replacement of abstractions by persons and actions, that the study of myth understandably developed as an independent discipline. Its relation to the discipline of history is of interest, especially in terms of the constructed difference between past and history, but we must also consider another discipline which is relevant to the study of myth: linguistic analysis.

Speculation on the role of language in the development of humanity occupied an important place in historical reflection from the beginning of the eighteenth century on. In the course of time the study of myth was involved in linguistic research much more intensively and systematically than was usually the case in historiography.[26]

The importance of the study of language for and in the study of myth can hardly be exaggerated. This emphasis on linguistic analysis was directly connected with the problem of the nature of myth. The transfer of the mythical core, which was in principle always taken to be non-verbal, into language and script was supposed to imply a far greater transformation of that core than was the case with historical sources. This transformation could explain why myths always seem to refer to a remote world in an indirect and distorted way. Myths seemed to call for decipherment: a liberation from language rather than translation from one language to another. While historical sources could be interpreted, mythical material called for dissection; and if historiography spoke in terms of mimesis, the study of myth must be couched in terms of metamorphosis. The study of language was therefore regarded as one of the most reliable scientific methods for the study of myth. During the first half of the nineteenth century, it was above all historical and comparative philology on which this aspect of the study of myth was based. Interest in comparative linguistics received an enormous stimulus at the end of the eighteenth century through the encounter with Sanskrit. The study of Sanskrit as a language and its extensive literature aroused considerable interest, leading to a taste for orientalism in France and in the German universities. Students of myth drew particularly on comparative etymology in the belief that by tracing the transformations of words they would be able to detect the origin and diffusion of concepts in a scientific manner. Here too the search was for a central core: comparative philology would strip the elementary idea of its later linguistic accretions to arrive at the primary formulation. Besides, etymology also had an authoritative precedent in the application of this method by the ancient Greeks.[27]

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[26] Only German exponents of cultural history during the period of High Romanticism tended to move in this direction, thereby promoting a rapprochement with the study of myth. See too L. Gossman, "History as Decipherment: Romantic Historiography and the Discovery of the Other", in *New Literary History* 18, 1986–1987, pp. 23–57.

Interpretation on the basis of the methods of the philologists was still determined by the two polar opposites in the study of myth as a whole. Once again, one could emphasize either the deepest layers of the human psyche as a mythopoeic faculty, or the influence of historical phenomena and developments. The presumed need to strip myth of language explains why it was primarily those tendencies which attributed mythopoesis in principle to an extra-historical mental process which showed the most interest in the study of language as a method for approaching this core. This predilection can be seen, not only among High Romantic scholars, but also in the theories of the analysis of myth as developed by S. Freud and, later, by Cl. Lévi-Strauss. The theoretical principle and the application of linguistic analysis differ in each of these systems, as well as differing from the taste for etymology which is typical of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

History, myth and language combine once we proceed to examine the most elementary knowledge about the Amazons—a name, [Amazones antianeirai].

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[27] R. Kany, *Mnemosyne als Programm. Geschichte, Erinnerung und die Andacht zum Unbedeutenden im Werk von Usener, Warburg und Benjamin.* Tübingen, 1987, pp. 13–66; H. Pedersen, *The Discovery of Language. Linguistic Science in the Nineteenth Century*, tr. J.W. Spargo, Bloomington 1931, 1959^2 (orig. Danish 1924); R. Schwab, *La Renaissance Orientale*, Paris 1950; M. Olender, *The Languages of Paradise. Race, Religion and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge Ma. 1992 (orig. Paris 1989).

CHAPTER ONE

INTERPRETATIONS OF THE AMAZON MYTH IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Linguistic archaeology: etymology as the key to the mythical core

> [. . .] In order to be able to give a true account, across the whole of mythology, as to why a mythical creature should be reckoned man or woman, we must first set upon a more secure foundation what the sexes meant to the prehistoric times. . . . There is much to be said on this point, especially if we seek by intellectual enquiry to come to terms with the feelings which made the first languages treat so many words as either masculine or feminine; the reasons for which are by no means clear to us.
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> K.O. Müller, *Prolegomena zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie*, Göttingen 1825, pp. 276–277.

In the course of the eighteenth century, changes took place in philosophical and scientific discussions which led to new approaches and even encouraged the development of new disciplines. By the end of the century an intellectual climate had arisen in which the corpus of existing knowledge was being profoundly revised and other perspectives led to new insights. Knowledge about the Amazons was no exception: the framework which had determined the idea of this remarkable female nation ever since the Middle Ages was now regarded as unsatisfactory.

The first steps towards a new conception of the Amazon motif can be seen in the results of a new branch of inquiry, comparative philology. If a new leaf was to be turned over, it was only natural to begin with an analysis of the sparse firm evidence on the Amazons. In dealing with the relation between the etymology of the name or word [Amazones] and the interpretation of the Amazons as a mythical female people, we should not forget that the etymological project which was set in motion at the end of the eighteenth century was not a *creatio ex nihilo*. The scholars of ancient Greece had already initiated interpretation of the Amazons by means of philological analysis. Both the ancient and the modern analyses of the word [Amazones] corresponded to a generally accepted practice of etymological explanation. The fact that this approach had already been attempted by commentators in antiquity was yet another reason for modern researchers to suppose that they were on firm ground. A selection from ancient Greek and modern etymological research may therefore help the reader to appreciate this approach to myth in general and to the core of the Amazon myth in particular.

According to literary tradition, Hellanikos of Lesbos (ca. 480–ca. 400 B.C.) was the first to attempt to explain the name [Amazones].[1] He was a contemporary of Herodotos, and betrays a similar intense interest in Greek and non-Greek stories and their background. A Byzantine scholiast cites him as follows:

> [. . .] they are called Amazons because they cut off their right breast to prevent it from getting in the way when they use their bows. This is untrue, because that would have been fatal to them. Hellanikos and Diodoros [II, 45, 3) say that they cauterized this spot with an iron object before it [the breast] began to grow, to prevent it from growing.
>
> (*FGrHist* 4 F 107)

The specific etymology in this citation may be connected with the representation of the Amazons as archers, a motif which can be found in the visual arts from the sixth century B.C. Apparently Hellanikos was referring to the etymology [a-mazos] or [a-mastos], which is later attested explicitly, resulting in [a-mazoon], "breastless". Perhaps he was even the *auctor intellectualis* of this etymology. The idea that the Amazons mutilated one or both breasts was a widespread assumption among Greek writers.[2]

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[1] All of the etymologies relate to the form [Amazones] or [Amazoon]. [Amazonides], the matronymic of [Amazones], is found sporadically in the extant texts. For the position and frequency of these words, see below, pp. 157, 159.

[2] According to Apollodoros, the Amazons amputated the right breast so as not to interfere with spear-throwing, but they retained the left breast for feeding (*Bibl.* II, v, 9). According to Dionysios Skythobrachion, cited by Diodoros (III, 53, 3), the Libyan Amazons lacked both breasts because they were cauterized as young girls to prevent their breasts from growing. Q. Curtius relates of the Amazons whom Alexandros met that they went into battle with the left side of their bodies bare and that they kept their left breast for feeding, while the right breast was cauterized (VI, 5, 27–29). This idea becomes

A scholiast on *Il.* III, 189 contains a remark by the Byzantine scholar Methodios:

> They were so called because they lacked one breast—for they cauterized it to prevent it from getting in the way when they used their bows—,or because they did not eat bread [maza], but tortoises, lizards and snakes.[3]

This analysis treats the words as a combination of the privative alpha, which indicates negation or exclusion, and a separate substantive, viz. [maza], a barley bread or gruel. This etymology invokes the significance of diet as a sign of civilization.[4] The same principle is at work here: a privative alpha in combination with a substantive is taken to characterize the nature of the Amazons.

Besides these etymologies in terms of the privative alpha, the preposition [ama] could also be detected in the word [Amazones], albeit with the uncommon prefix [ama] instead of the more common aspirated [hama]. Two cases, which are only attested at a late date, will prove to be interesting: [ama-zoosai], "living together",[5] and [ama]zoonais], "with girdles".[6]

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much clearer if we bear in mind the Greek association of the left with femininity and the right with masculinity. The close association of left and right with the body can be seen, for example, from Platon's account of the development of the two hands as a step towards the equal possibilities of educating men and women, *Laws* VII, 795; on this theme in general see G.E.R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy. Two Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought*, Oxford 1966, pp. 48–56. According to Arrianos (*An.* VII, 13, 2), it was said of a group of women who were considered to be Amazons that their right breast was smaller and that they exposed it in battle.

[3] Loc. cit. and *Anecd. Graeca* ed. Cramer, I, 80.

[4] For a survey of Herodotos' classification of the peoples of the world in terms of a number of categories, including diet, see M. Rosellini and S. Saïd, "Usages de femmes et autres nomoi chez les 'sauvages' d' Hérodote: essai de lecture structurale", *ANSP* s. III, vol. VIII, 8, 1978, pp. 949–1005; B.D. Shaw, "Eaters of Flesh, Drinkers of Milk: The Ancient Mediterranean Ideology of the Pastoral Nomad", *AncSoc* 13, 1982/3, pp. 5–31; and for the connection between diet and mental balance see M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité. 2: L'usage des plaisirs*, Paris 1984, Ch. II. In this typology, the "normal" human diet of agricultural produce is replaced by animal produce that is generally regarded as inedible and even evokes strong chthonic associations. In *Suppl.* 289 Aischylos refers to the Amazons as "eaters of (raw) meat". Are we to situate this remark within the world of representations which identifies cultural types in dietary terms, and should we also imagine an association of the [a-maza] kind? It is likely that in this case "raw meat" refers primarily to the association of the Amazons with Ares; see below, pp. 180, 183, 259–265, although that does not exclude an ethnological reference.

[5] Serv. ad *Aen.* I, 490.

[6] Themistagoras in *Anecd. Graeca* ed. Cramer, I, 80, 8–18. It is significant

A relatively simple etymology derives the name of the Amazons from Amazo, a priestess of Artemis.[7] In fact, this is less of an etymology than a compressed genealogy [Amazo-nes], but it cannot be classified as a genealogical account because the sources present it as a simple derivation which is never expanded in any way to form a story or explanation. This is in contrast with the idea that the Amazons were descended from Ares, god of war, a genealogy which had limited influence on the Amazon motif but was widely diffused. The relations between the Amazons and the temple in Ephesos form the framework of this etymology.

It should be noted that these representations of the Amazons, for example as women lacking one or both breasts or with an unusual diet, are the result of the etymology, not vice versa. This will become clearer once we have seen how vague and unfamiliar the Amazon people traditionally was, while the representation of these military women certainly stirred the imagination. The etymology illustrates how language was used to fill in the picture of the Amazons. However, the associations which a word evokes are not purely or exclusively determined by linguistic data. Associations are evoked within a wider context of an individual or cultural mental climate. There is no inherent necessity to connect the word [Amazones] with the etymologies referred to, but it is possible to distinguish specific words within them if required. In other words, there must be a general predisposition to distinguish words in this manner; there must be a felt need for a clearer picture of the Amazons; and a proper understanding of these etymologies cannot be confined to the primary sources, but must be extended to the entire mentality on which they are based.[8]

The first striking aspect of these etymologies is the fact that those based on the privative alpha, which seem to have begun around the middle of the fifth century on the evidence of Hellanikos,

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that the word [zoonè] is chosen to refer to the girdle of the Amazons in this etymology. In most of the accounts which refer to the girdle—practically all of them are narratives of Herakles' theft of the girdle—the word used is [zoostèr]. See too Klügmann, *Die Amazonen*, pp. 13–15 and below, pp. 424–430.

[7] Steph. Byz. s.v. Ephesos; Eusth. ad Dion. 828; *Anecd. Graeca*, ib.

[8] The latter considerations will be dealt with in more detail in the following chapters to the extent that they fall within the chronological boundaries of this study; the present remarks are limited to a brief discussion and a more detailed treatment of the first point.

represent the Amazons as women who are lacking in some essential. Although the removal of a breast is presented as a practical measure, the Amazons had to purchase their military aggressiveness at what for women must be an exorbitant price. If this etymology is compared with the [ama-zoosai] and [ama-zonais] etymologies, the latter can be seen to depict the Amazons as a people distinguished in a positive way. They no longer lack something, but they possess something special—a community of their own. This is expressed in the term "living together", and even more strongly in the term "girdle", whether as [zoostèr] indicating the internal hierarchy of this people,[9] or as [zoonè] emphasising the physical femininity of the Amazons.[10] In other words, in the case of the [ama-zoosai] and [ama-zonais] etymologies, the exclusively female composition of the Amazon nation is not presented as a characteristic which automatically turns them into disorderly barbarians. Even the derivation from the name Amazo presents the Amazons as an autonomous people with a priestess as female ancestor, while the Greek god of war Ares is no longer the most important figure as their paternal ancestor. There is no explicit negative evaluation of this specific character.

The [ama] interpretations seem to imply that the etymologies based on the privative alpha were no longer adequate.[11] Apparently the image of the Amazons had changed to such an extent that there was a need to define the Amazons in terms of different essential characteristics. However, this also indicates that Greek scholars did not really know the meaning of the name [Amazones]. Even though it could be broken down into Greek words, the solutions put forward were evidently not entirely satisfactory. Nevertheless, not a single Greek writer suggested that the name might not be Greek. This assumption contrasts sharply with the conviction that the Amazons were a non-Greek people. The oldest literary sources, which drew on Homeric epic, make no mention of the possibility that they were not Greeks, which is in accordance with the lack of interest shown by the epic narratives in what made non-Achaians different. From the sixth century, however, the "barbarous", i.e. non-Greek character of other peoples was a fact which became the object of speculation. In the first instance the difference was a linguistic one: non-Greek or barbarian means not speaking the Greek language. The presence of a non-Greek language was taken to imply the existence of a non-Greek way of life, which was increasingly explored. These views did not prevent the people concerned from being indicated by Greek names, just as the gods of the barbarous peoples were indicated by names taken from the Greek pantheon. There is a discrepancy between the linguistic difference of the Other, and the conferring of a name which—certainly in the case of the Amazons—was sustained with a remarkable degree of persistence within the framework of the language of the Greeks themselves. In view of this discrepancy, one must not expect to find a high degree of consistency.

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[9] Apoll. *Bibl.* II, v, 9.

[10] On the meaning of these two types, see below, pp. 424–430.

[11] It is unlikely that the new versions were devised because the previous ones were entirely unknown. The account of the mutilated breast(s) is so common in Hellenistic and later sources that the etymology in terms of [a-mazos] or [a-mastos] must have been familiar within the educated world.

All of these considerations apply to the Amazons too. As we shall see, initially the Amazons were situated in the world of the non-Greek peoples in order to lend a specific content to their elusive appearance. However, this constant effort to represent the Amazons as a barbarous people did not have any effect on the conviction that the name [Amazones] could be explained within the terms of the Greek language. The names which were assigned to the Amazons over the years in stories or on artefacts are clearly Greek: Penthesileia, Andromache, Ainia, Glauke, Hippolyte, Antiope.[12] They are all purely Greek names, which could be understood without any difficulty and which were sometimes used as the proper names of other women. At the linguistic level, then, we can detect an ambivalence *vis-à-vis* the Amazons: were they Greeks or not? Further analysis of these data is related to the question of the embedding of the unfamiliar Amazons in the familiar view of the world.

Modern etymological approaches towards their predecessors in antiquity have variously displayed acceptance, rejection or expansion. Once again, it is assumed that the etymology of the name of the Amazons will throw light on their nature.

There is no need to deal with the repetition of the Greek exempla at length. They are mentioned in the authoritative dictionaries and are usually provided with remarkably little commentary. For instance, the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*[13] limits its remarks on [amazos] to the statement that this is also to be taken as [mono-mazos]. The *Lexicon Homericum* adds to [a-mazos] "quae tangi nequent" (privative alpha and [massein]; "unapproachable women"), and a derivation from [amazein], "metentes" ([ama] and [hazo], "honour, reverence"?).[14] Frisk cites and rejects a reconstruction of an ancient form combining the privative alpha with a word for "man".[15] The *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos* rejects the [a-mazos] etymology and thereby brings a long-standing tradition to a close—regrettably without any indication of the grounds for doing so.[16]

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[12] These names are further discussed in Chapters III and V.

The modern innovation in this well-tried procedure consists of looking for the root of the word outside Greek in a foreign, "barbarous" language. The inventiveness of the results of comparative philology since the eighteenth century can be seen in the entry for "Amazones" in the *Trésor des origines et dictionnaire grammatical raisonné de la langue française* by Ch. Pougens.[17] To quote a few examples: confusion with Alizones;[18] "Teutonic" [metze] (= "scortum"; woman of loose morals); Middle Gothic "magath" (= virgin; a suggestion made by the Dutch poet and philologist W. Bilderdijk); Kalmukian "aeme" and "tzaïne" (= women and excellent"; Cherkessian [maza] (= moon),[19] and from areas further south Hebrew and Sorabian "zouneh" (= fallen woman). One wonders what kind of relation these scholars supposed to exist between these languages and Greek that would suffice to explain the Amazon myth from these derivations. In view of the development of the Amazon motif in the sixth century B.C., it was not unreasonable in itself to look for the "original language" in the Black Sea region, where the Amazons were believed to be situated at that time. The same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to a relationship with Persia, which many have supposed to have influenced the image of the Amazons in fifth-century Athens. The suggestion of O. Lagercrantz[20] that the origin of the name of the Amazons should be sought in the Iranian *ha-mazan, "warrior" attracted the attention of Frisk and Chantraine.[21] A preference for the northern region is evidenced by A. Urusadze, who opts for Caucasian "amaze", "youth",[22] while G.W. Elderkin advanced a complicated argument to trace the Skythian word for the Amazons attested by Herodotos (IV, 110), [Oiorpata], back to Hittite.[23] Ever since W. Leonhard launched his great Hittite thesis,[24] in which he proposed the recently discovered Hittite culture as the missing link in the problem of the origin of the Amazons, various attempts have been made to anchor the Amazons firmly in this context, and etymology proved an important link in the chain of reasoning. Leonard supported his hypothesis with a derivation from the town called [Mazaka];[25] G.L. Huxley proposed an identification of the Amazons with the "Arzawans";[26] and Cornelius tried to find Hittite derivations not only for the name [Amazones] but also for [Penthesileia].[27]

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[13] *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, ed. Stephanus, Hase, Dindorf et al. Paris 1831–1865 s.v. [Amazones].

[14] H. Ebeling, ed. *Lexicon Homericum*, Hildesheim 1885, 1963^2, s.v. Amazones.

[15] H. Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg 1954–1972, III vols., s.v. Amazones. G. Bonfante, "Il nome delle Amàzzoni", *AAL*, 1983, pp. 151–153, revived this theory, adducing new arguments based on Thrakian and Illyrian; see below, p. 87, n. 162.

[16] *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*, B. Snell and H.J. Mette, eds. Göttingen 1955-; Bd. I, A. (1979^2) s.v. [Amaz(oon)]. (Sch.).

[17] Ch. Pougens, *Spéculum du Trésor des origines et dictionnaire grammatical raisonné de la langue française*, Paris 1819. Pougens began his work in 1777; in the introduction he acknowledges the assistance of Prof. Daniel Wyttenbach of Leiden.

[18] This etymology goes back to Strabon, XII, 3, 21 and fits in with the ancient tradition.

[19] Creuzer, *Symbolik*, 1819^2, II, p. 173 does offer an explanation of the relation between Cherkessian and the Amazon myth; see below, p. 42.

Unlike their ancient predecessors, hardly any of these scholars accepts the existence of an Amazon people as described in the Greek stories.[28] In considering the question of the relation between the Greek image and the possible historical core, we can detect a shift of emphasis from the purely philological arguments to those advanced by scholars who would connect the etymological procedure with ethnographic or historical data. In the etymological explanations of the former type, the origin of the Amazon story as a myth is equated with the origin that is supposed to have taken place in language. Analysis of the language in which the myth is embedded, a procedure that is confined to the name of the mythical personages concerned in the case of the Amazons, is supposed to disclose the kernel of the myth by itself.[29] Myths are taken to be the result of a failure in communication between Greek speakers and those who speak a different language. The supposition of such a contact, however indirect or superficial it is taken to be, is thus essential to this hypothesis on the creation of a myth.

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[20] O. Lagercrantz, *Xenia Lidénia*, Stockholm 1912, *non vidi*; a different Iranian etymology is defended by B. Hemmerdinger, "L'étymologie d'[Amazones]", *SIFC* 6, 1988, pp. 146–147, who connects it with Persian "hemeh zen" = "toutes femmes".

[21] Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. [Amazones]; P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque: histoire des mots*, Paris 1968–1980, IV vols., s.v. [Amazones].

[22] A.V. Urusadze, "Zur Herkunft des Amazonen-Namens", *Philologus* 120, 1976, pp. 123-125.

[23] G.W. Elderkin, "Oitosyros and Oiorpata", *AJP* 56, 1935, pp. 342–346. The approach to the Amazon myth shared by Elderkin is discussed below, n. 28.

[24] W. Leonhard, *Hettiter und Amazonen. Die griechische Tradition über die "Chatti" und ein Versuch zu ihrer historischen Bewertung*, Leipzig/Berlinn 1911.

[25] Leonhard, *Hettiter und Amazonen*, pp. 146–147.

[26] G.L. Huxley, "Homer's Amazons", *PP* 15, 1960, pp. 122–124.

[27] F. Cornelius, *Geschichte der Hethiter*, Darmstadt 1973, pp. 269–270 and 348. I am grateful to Ms L. Aerts for furnishing me with this reference.

This insight plays a part in the second type of argumentation. In this case, the purely linguistic argument is no longer sufficient in itself, but a historical context is a second desideratum. The core of the myth is then taken to be a non-linguistic entity, which bears some resemblance to the ancient Amazons. It is thus necessary, according to this hypothesis, that some transformation has taken place, for otherwise the core would coincide with the mythical story itself. The proposals mentioned above, dating roughly from the middle of the nineteenth century on, tend to ascribe the Greek image of the Amazons to a combination of misunderstandings. Linguistic confusion features as an important argument in these approaches, but particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century a prejudiced Greek perception of foreign peoples comes to the fore as a mythopoetic element. The etymology is associated with a (bare) reference to the strange life-style of non-Greek peoples,[30] or to stormy historical developments such as the fall of the Hittite empire.[31] In this respect these scholars are indirectly following the Greek tradition, in which the etymology of the word [Amazones] as the analysis of the linguistic surface was directly connected with a (re)construction of non-Greek life-styles which recall an Amazon society. Unlike the Greek etymologists, however, modern scholars draw on a large number of languages from which the word [Amazones] might be derived. This virtually endless range of possible languages, which is only conditioned by regional limits, is accompanied by a corresponding presentation of relatively simple ethnographic details and historical themes.

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[28] It is noteworthy that almost all of these etymologies are regarded as untenable by modern specialists. I have put Urusadze's suggestion to A.H. Kuipers in Leiden (personal communication) and the Iranian approach of Lagercrantz as well as a part of Elderkin's argument to H.W.A.M. Sancisi-Weerdenburg in Utrecht (personal communication); R.D. Barnett has reacted to the Hittite proposals in *CAH* 3rd ed. vol. II, 2, p. 418; M. Ebert, *Südrussland im Altertum*, Bonn/Leipzig 1921 has responded to the speculations regarding South Russia as the region of the Amazon peoples. Like any other interpretation, these apparently reliable linguistic reconstructions are open to question too, but none of the specialists consulted saw any value in these philological suggestions regarding the origin of the Amazon myth.

[29] The authors cited in Pougens, *Trésor*, *Lexicon Homericum*, Lagercrantz, Bonfante, and Hemmerdinger can all be classified as belonging to this type.

One important aspect of the etymological method requires further comment. The Greek examples show that the femininity of the Amazons is an essential ingredient of the etymological explanation. The Greek ethnographic Amazonology never seriously defended the proposition that the Amazons were in fact men either.[32] To my knowledge, only one ancient author deviated from this firmly held conviction. This is the author known under the pseudonym of Palaiphatos, whose *Peri Apistoon* (ca. 360–320) displays a strikingly through-going rationalization of the mythical themes discussed and in which the writer presents his personal view in an apparently self-conscious way:

> This is my view of the Amazons, that they were not women who waged war, but barbarian men, and that they wore clothing which extended over their feet, like that of the Thrakian women, and that they bound their hair in hair-bands and shaved off their beards like . . .[33] And that is why they were called women by

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[30] As in the case of Elderkin and Urusadze, for example.

[31] Leonard, Huxley and Cornelius; cf. the migration theory of K.O. Müller, below p. 53.

[32] Strabon, XI, 5, 3 expresses his scepticism on the reality of the Amazons, precisely because he is unable to imagine that a state or army could be composed of or led by women alone; that would imply that in earlier times women were men and vice versa. Strabon is thus not suggesting in this passage that the Amazons were actually men, but he sees grounds for doubting the historicity of the Amazon people. In this respect Strabon's text betrays a rare scepticism with regard to the Amazon tradition.

[33] The text here is incomprehensible. S.L. Radt has confirmed this in a

> their opponents. The Amazons were a people that excelled in fighting. But fighting was never for women; nor is it so anywhere today.[34]

In general, the feminity of the Amazons was a given from the first,[35] though later the image of the Amazons was furnished with men as well and the conclusion was drawn that it was the *roles* of men and women which had been reversed in the case of the Amazons. Furthermore, the etymological discovery of the amputation of their breasts indicates that the Amazons had to adjust physically to their masculine role. Vice versa, the men who lived among the Amazons would have had to be physically handicapped in order to be able to fulfil their unmanly—but certainly not emasculated—role. It is easy to explain the relation between these programmes of life among the Amazons and the etymological explanations. The holistic view of the unity of mind and body, including the representation of the functions of the four humours and the four elements, is the connecting element. This perception of physical reality stirred the imagination as regards the physical reality of the Amazons and their menfolk. We find a reference to this in the following scholium on a passage from Mimnermos:

> It is said that the Amazons mutilated their male offspring by amputating a leg or a hand. When the Skythians were at war with them and wanted to make an agreement with them, they said that they [the Amazons] would not find any mutilated or handicapped marriage partners among the Skythians. But Antianeira, the commander of the Amazons, gave them the following reply: "the lame one makes love best". Mimnermos has preserved this saying.[36]

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personal communication. He further pointed out that the citation must be earlier than the period of Alexandros the Great, when men first shaved off their beards. On the Thrakian associations of the Amazons see Ch. III.

[34] Palaiphatos fr. 32, ed. Festa (1902) *Mythographi Graeci*; "Peri Amazonoon". This fragment has been systematically ignored by the scholars who have devoted themselves to the Amazon myth, probably because it is only reconcilable with a view which attempts to confer on the Amazons an unambiguous meaning.

[35] On the significance of this traditional given, see below, Ch. II.

[36] Cod. Athen. 1083. Another interesting feature of this passage is the use of the epithet [antianeira] as a proper noun; this is one of the many Greek proper names for Amazons derived from the characteristics attributed to them. One might also compre the derivation of [Amazones] from Amazo, discussed above. Incidentally, the attribution to Mimnermos (fr. 21a West) is uncertain. Virtually the same story can be found in a passage in Montaigne,

When we turn to modern scholars, however, the question arises: did they conceive of the Amazons as men or as women? Some of the etymologies collected by Pougens pick on a special word for "woman", varying from virgin to whore, but later scholars pay little heed to the femininity of the Amazons. Lagercrantz and Urusadze looked for a word for "man" without any evident reflection, and Leonhard proposed an entire people, the Hittites, as the genuine Amazons, without tackling the question of they these people feature in the myth as a nation of *women*. They assume that the sexes have been confused in the course of the formation of the myth, or even disregard the question of gender entirely. The only argument that I could imagine for doing so—the fact that the ethnic designation [Amazones] has masculine associations in Greek even though the male plural generally refers to both sexes[37]—does not play any part in their arguments. Apart from the etymological procedure itself, modern scholars have shown little interest in the Greek tradition which persisted in referring to the female gender of the Amazons. By defining the core of the Amazons as the historical reality of the Hittites, for instance, they detach themselves completely from the Greek *imaginaire*. What accounts for this lack of interest in the exclusive femininity of the Amazons as a nation?[38]

Before venturing an explanation, we must first consider the mental context implied by the etymological procedure. What are

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in which the saying "the lame one makes love best" is followed by an explanation in terms of the principle of corporeal energy which forms the background of the fragment in question. The men who were to be found among the Amazons lacked arms and legs, so that they were exceptionally potent. It was no wonder that the Amazon queen had no need of an ordinary man to share her bed! The Amazon story here serves as an illustration of the thesis, but the roles are reversed: Montaigne is discussing an Italian saying that a man who has never slept with a lame woman has never known the true joys of love. *Essais*, III, 11, ed. Pléiade, Paris 1933, p. 996. I am grateful to P. Schotel for drawing this passage to my attention.

[37] See below, pp. 158–159. Only H.L. Krause, *Die Amazonensage, kritisch untersucht und gedeutet*, Berlin 1893 tackles the "masculine" character of the ethnic designation, following K.O. Müller. In his view, behind the Amazons one finds the original Minyans, a people which naturally consisted of both men and women. The migrations at the end of the first millennium B.C. eliminated the Minyans from history, but as a result of the brave actions of the Minyan women, so the theory runs, they entered the world of myth as a nation of women.

[38] This remarkable exclusion of the factor of gender will reappear in the discussion of the ethnological explanations.

the conditions for the assumption that the etymology of a word or name can throw special light on the person or thing designated by it? Etymology provides insights into the linguistic history of a word, and if it is assumed, as was the case in early historicism, that a phenomenon is explicable in terms of its history, then linguistic analysis of this kind acquires a special significance. This is even more the case as far as myths are concerned, for it was generally assumed that their core dated from a remote past, and that their visible, historical form could provide a representative rendering of that past, even if it was marked by linguistic ambivalence. Moreover, since there was a more general confidence that linguistic analysis could provide access to hidden stages of culture, this concatenation may explain why, from the beginning of the nineteenth century on, mythology could assume and restore the etymological procedure to its place of honour as a valuable and valid Greek procedure.

The Greek examples, however, cannot be attributed to a historical awareness that is in any way related to modern historicism. Greek ideas about cultural difference hardly developed by means of a concept of a Greek past as a period with different cultural forms, but through the confrontation with non-Greeks. Certainly, the Greeks associated the Amazons with the past, but this remained vague in many ways. Not only was there no coherent perception of the past in which the Amazons were incorporated in a variety of ways—the historical view of the mythical past was too speculative for that[39]—but in other respects too, the Amazons were not figures who were confined to the heroic past, for time and again these women turned out to intervene in the present as well. On the other hand, acquaintance with other peoples encouraged the (etymological) interpretation of the Amazons. As we have seen, the attempt of the Greeks to come to terms with the idea "Amazon" is based, not on historical difference, but on ethnographic difference. This was illustrated in the Greek etymology of the word [Amazones], which was approached as a piece of contemporary Greek and not as a residue from earlier times.

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[39] An interesting example is provided by the Marmor Parium (*FGrHist* 239), a chronological table from ca. 264/3 B.C., in which all kinds of events are marked by a date. For instance, a few of the major games are mentioned, but not the Olympian games; the tribute to Minos and the Thesean synoikismos are recorded, but not the Argonauts or Herakles. Item 21 in the edition in *FGrHist* is the Attic campaign of the Amazons during the reign of Theseus. As Jacoby demonstrates in his commentary ad loc., the date implied for this campaign by the Marmor Parium is 1256/5 B.C. Calculating on the same basis, the seige of Troy is placed in 1218/7–1209/8, and the beginning of the Ionian colonization in 1077 B.C. Section B of the Marmor Parium covers the period of Alexandros the Great, but it makes no mention of the Amazon queen. Despite the impression of specificity and exactitude conveyed by the list, it is clear that it juxtaposes phenomena which we would regard as purely mythical beside actual historical events without any distinction. A striking illustration of a different kind is provided by Platon *Legg.* VI, 782 a–d; after drawing a clear-cut distinction between two views of the past, which one might anachronistically label a creationist and an evolutionist interpretation,

Furthermore, the Greek etymology reveals a different approach to the development of knowledge, and one which is also based on comparison as an intellectual activity. The devising of etymologies to explain the unknown formed an unmistakable part of Greek critical thought, whose nature and origins have been the cause of a large-scale debate. It is not for nothing that present day, largely comparative inquiry into the processes of literacy and its effects on forms of thought and communication returns time and time again to the impressive Greek developments and initiatives.[40] One of the findings of this research is that the use of writing facilitates a different arrangement of traditional information and even promotes new arrangements. An important example of the latter aspect is formed by systematic lists, such as accounts, numerical and alphabetical surveys, and vocabularies. Knowledge of this kind cannot be transferred orally, for oral reports cannot be transmitted in a different system than the one in which they have been recorded and delivered. Once the information is set down in writing, however, they can be set—literally—side by side, rearranged and analyzed.[41] The use of writing thus not only affects traditional repositories of

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the speaker does not pursue this line of thought any further, but falls immediately back on mythical elements and notions, such as the Golden Age and "Orphic" culture, since these were the mould in which a construction of the past had to be cast. Cf. M.I. Finley, "Myth, Memory and History", in *The Use and Abuse of History*, London 1975^2, pp. 11–33.

[40] J. Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*, Cambridge/London etc. 1977; idem, *The Interface between the Written and the Oral*, Cambridge etc. 1987; E. A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, Harvard/Cambridge 1963; idem, *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, Princeton 1982; M. Detienne, *L'invention de la mythologie*, Paris 1981, pp. 123–154; R. Thomas, *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge 1992 (Key Themes in Ancient History).

[41] Goody, *The Domestication*, Ch. 5 describes this process in detail.

knowledge, but it also creates new forms and distinguishes specific elements as information which were not recognised as such before.

Etymology can be understood within the framework of this literate structuring of knowledge. It is certainly possible to analyze a word entirely phonetically, so that in this respect the use of writing need not be regarded as a necessary and sufficient condition. However, a detailed etymology of the kind developed by Greek scholars, probably beginning with Hellanikos as far as the etymology of the Amazons is concerned, is hardly conceivable without the aid of writing. In oral culture a word is not an isolated element, but it is a "bit of speech", as Goody has put it.[42] It functions within an ongoing context in which rhythm, sound, framework and associations are more important than the word itself. The word [Amazones] is first found in the epic formula [Amazones antianeirai],[43] originally a unit of sound which was recorded orally. The emphasis within the rhythmic pattern of the hexameter lies on the second syllable [A'mazones], but when the formula is written down the accent shifts to the third syllable [Amazónes]. Etymologists have to begin by detaching the word from its context in oral delivery, and attempts to break it down into [A-mazones] or [(h)Ama-zones] imply the visualization of the word as a sequence of letters in the Greek alphabet, capable of being broken down into independent elements, such as prefixes and nouns. At this point, the word is no longer experienced as a "bit of speech", but as an isolated object which lends itself for dissection and comparison.

The fact that Hellanikos and others belonged to the literate world and wrote "bücherweise Bücher" may seem obvious enough, but it is important to realize that the chain of ideas resulting in the etymology is proof of a fully literate mentality. At the risk of exaggeration, one might see the development of etymology as the pleasure that literate Greeks experienced, not just in their language, but precisely in Greek as a written language. The precondition of literate thought as tentatively described here clearly sets the etymological explanation of the Amazon myth within the limits of that mental world, as well as indicating the scope of the content of these explanations. The idea that the Amazons mutilated their breasts was not a part of the popular version of the myth, at least not at first. The fact that in the visual arts, which addressed their audience in a much more direct manner, the Amazons were never represented with a single breast, is thus partly to be explained in this way.

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[42] Goody, *The Domestication*, p. 115 demonstrates why a "word" is experienced not as an independent unit but as a part of continuing speech in an oral culture.

[43] See below, Ch. II.

To conclude, Greek etymologies are probably closely connected with the literate revolution, which left its permanent mark on part of the Greek population from the fifth century B.C. on. These etymologies draw on the related possibility of isolating and comparing data and apply this analysis to language itself. This was the mental climate in which a number of literati attempted to contribute to the understanding of the Amazons by analyzing the word [Amazones]. The main features of the results are as follows. Initially the analysis as a combination of privative alpha with a substantive was dominant, from which we may deduce that the Amazons were identified as a people that lacked something. If [a-mazoon] was taken to mean [a-mastoon], "breastless", then the name referred to their martial way of life, connected with an interest in their physical condition.[44] The later attested variant [a-maza], taken to mean "without grain", indicates a cultural difference between Greeks and Amazons, which is in accordance with a widespread view of difference in terms of diet. In the second instance, which goes back no further than the Hellenistic period, there is a new etymology using the element [ama]. In these later etymologies, the Amazons are distinguished as a people with a cultural system of their own, and no negative emphasis is placed on their difference from Greeks. The use of [zoostèr] and [zoonè] inevitably associates the Amazons with Greek cultural aspects.

These etymologies relied on contemporary Greek as the standard. Inevitably, the otherness of the Amazons was described by the Greeks in their own language. What is particularly striking, however, is the absence of any notion that the name of these non-Greek Amazons might itself belong to a non-Greek language. While the concept of the Amazons was created by comparing them with other non-Greek peoples, a comparison based on an awareness of linguistic difference, the name of the Amazons was regarded as fully Greek. The Greek etymology thus indicates to what an extent the Amazons were still regarded as a contemporary phenomenon, despite the associations in Homeric epic in which they figured as a people of the past. Furthermore, the different explanations made it obvious that the ancient etymologies could not hit upon the original core of the word with any certainty.

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[44] For a more detailed analysis of the physicality of the Amazons, see below, Chs. III and V.

The etymological procedure came back into fashion at the end of the eighteenth century and has continued to be regarded as an acceptable method of scientific inquiry to the present. Its role in mythological inquiry was supported by the new comparative philology and by historicism. In the study of mythology, the difference between the mythical narrative and its mythical core was interpreted as a difference in time, and etymology was seen as a way of bridging this gap between narrative and core. Since this idea was connected with a systematic view of the past, modern mythological research has abandoned the Greek example in this respect, but the Greek versions continue to exert their influence in other ways. They are still retained in some lexicons. Furthermore, as can be seen from the modern etymologies, the linguistic search for the Amazons followed in the footsteps of the Greeks in its choice of location, such as the region to the north of Greece. During the course of the nineteenth century an ethnographic element was added, which in turn represented a continuation of the Greek interpretations. In this connection it is all the more remarkable that the exclusively female character of the Amazons disappeared from the etymologies, even though in the Greek tradition this essential element played a key role in the earliest historical interpretations of the Amazon myth.

Historical interpretations: Creuzer and Müller

The debate on Greek mythology which took place at the beginning of the nineteenth century was particularly intensive and diverse among German scholars. The rapid developments in related branches of science enriched the variety of the arguments, and philosophical ideas were exchanged about the nature of culture and human thought. The views of Greek mythology were largely stimulated by differences in the approach to the methods and objectives of the study of antiquity, differences which sometimes led to bitter conflicts among classical scholars. During this period, the learned world generally understood Greek antiquity in terms of either an enlightened Hellenism, with its historical presuppositions in the wake of J.J. Winckelmann and F.A. Wolf, or a Romantic idealism.[45] For their part, classical studies fulfilled an exemplary role thanks to the enormous prestige of antiquity and the ancient texts, while the study of mythology in particular bordered on theology and the science of religions. This is the intellectual background to the most important views of the Amazon myth, which can be seen at their clearest in the work of Creuzer and Müller.

The Greek scholar G. Friedrich Creuzer (1771–1858) was the first to provide an interpretation of the Amazon myth in which the historical paradigm begins to surface in mythological studies. In his *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen* (1810–1812),[46] a work partly influenced by the inspired mythological work of the prolific writer J. Görres[47] and by the growing interest in Sanskrit, Creuzer entered the debate with a large-scale vision of his own, combining (pre)history, mythology and cultural philosophy, in an attempt to demonstrate the unity supposed to lie behind historical phenomena. It is difficult to classify Creuzer's work in terms of the distinction between Enlightenment and Romanticism, for his wonderful prose is imaginative rather than systematic, and is not conducive to concise summary. E. Howald concluded from his study of the *Symbolik* and the reaction it provoked that although Creuzer belonged on the side of the Enlightenment, his mythological work was exceptional in this respect, revealing a Romantic side instead.[48] R. Pfeiffer regarded Creuzer's *Symbolik* as the most vociferous opposition to the historicizing approach to mythology, as embodied in K.O. Müller as its leading representative.[49] Yet it was this same work which was one of the main sources of inspiration for J.J. Bachofen, who was to regard myth as a source of historical information *par excellence* and to interpret the Amazons as representatives of a matriarchy which had flourished in the past.[50] A brief discussion of the *Symbolik* may help to show why these mutually opposing interpretations are both tenable.

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[45] J.J. Winckelmann (1717–1768); F.A. Wolf (1759– 1824); for a concise picture of the main scholars and of the principles they followed, see R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship, 1300–1850*, Oxford 1976, pp. 167–190.

[46] Fr. Creuzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*, IV vols. Leipzig/Darmstadt 1810–1812; second edition IV vols. 1819–1821, expanded with two additional volumes—"Geschichte des Heidenthums im nördlichen Europa" by F.J. Mone—as *Symbolik und Mythologie* vols. V and VI, 1822–1823; third edition 1837–1842. The reputation of Creuzer's views was mainly based on the second, revised edition of 1819–1821. Since this was also the edition to which K.O. Müller responded at greatest length, the present analysis is based on this edition.

[47] J. Görres, (1776–1848); *Mythengeschichte der asiatischen Welt*, 1810.

[48] E. Howald, *Der Kampf um Creuzers Symbolik. Eine Auswahl von Dokumenten*, Tübingen 1926, p. 10.

"There is a painful yearning to bring forth the infinite in the finite."
Fr. Creuzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie,* 1819/2, vol. I p. 58.

Creuzer's starting point was his theory of the symbol. As the expression of early man's immediate experience of his natural surroundings, the symbol embodied both thought and sense perception. It always retained an ambiguous character as a single product of the ascending spirit. The symbol became linked with brief explanatory comments, which gradually expanded to become longer narrative explanations or myths. While local factors had their influence on the myths, behind this mythological diversity lay a single, original, symbolic world of experience which had developed to become a deeply felt natural religion. The latter had its roots in the religions of Egypt and India. Since early man was not fully rational, priests emerged to make these narratives and explanations of the symbols their own preserve. This priestly doctrine spread from East to West, transmitted from people to people. The natural religion also reached Greece through Asia Minor, but this stage of culture was gradually supplanted in the classical Greek world by the more familiar, rationalistic, transparent Olympian religion and philosophy. A meticulous analysis of the textual material can still uncover the traces of what was once a universal natural symbolism and a mythic, poetic and at times ecstatic religion.

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[49] Pfeiffer, *Classical Scholarship*, p. 187. Cf. J.H. Blok, "Quests for a Scientific mythology. Fr. Creuzer and K.O. Müller on history and myth", *History and Theory* 1994 (Beiheft). As we shall, see, it was particularly on the question of the Amazon myth that the relationship between the two scholars was in fact more complex.

[50] J.J. Bachofen (1815–1887), *Das Mutterrecht*, Stuttgart 1861, in *Gesammelte Werke*, K. Meuli, ed. Band II/III Basel 1948. On the idealism of both works

Creuzer's major contribution was his view of the core of the myth as an original, unifying idea behind the multiplicity of mythical narratives. This core, he claimed, lay in the spiritual nature of mythopoeic man. The ability "to transpose what has been thought into what has happened",[51] as he described the essence of myth, is also a feature of his own work. It reveals him as an idealist who regarded religious and historical processes as determined by an a priori definition of the human spirit. Creuzer's view of this spiritual nature and its creative, symbolic potential reflects the preoccupations of his time relating to the nature of human knowledge, the place of rationality in relation to other faculties, the essence of art,[52] and the origin of culture. He by no means shared Chr.G. Heyne's view of myth as a representation of history influenced by poetic fantasy, nor the idea that was to be put forward by K.O. Müller that myth was the result of history itself. In Creuzer's eyes, it was the spirit which created symbol, myth and history; in this respect his work was "philosophy decked out with philology",[53] and in this respect it is all the more clear why a philosopher like Schelling held the *Symbolik* in such esteem; in fact, the latter attributed an even greater significance to the unity behind the historical diversity.[54]

Nevertheless, the *Symbolik* does contain a more or less historical process of development, revealing Creuzer's receptivity to the idea that human history develops in stages, which had been

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and on the relationship between Bachofen and Creuzer, see my "Sexual Asymmetry".

[51] "Das Gedachte in ein Geschehen umzusetzen", Creuzer, *Symbolik*, 2nd ed. I, p. 99.

[52] On the relation between symbol and art, see *Symbolik* 2nd ed. I, pp. 62ff.

[53] As Howald paraphrases Creuzer's position in the third edition of the *Symbolik*, *Der Kampf*, p. 13.

[54] "Anyone who cannot develop his philosophy to the point where it stands equal to—at the same level as— its objective, so that he is in a position to set out a theory which is at one and the same time fully scientific and fully historical,—any such person should restrain himself from the exposition of such a theory at all . . . the *truly* historical is at one with the scientific . . . the *truly* historical consists of finding the basis of development latent within the object of study itself, the internal, objective basis for development; just as this principle of development, however, is found within the object of study, so must all independent anticipatory thoughts be dismissed; from this point on, each object has to be followed in terms of its own development". F.W.J. von Schelling, "Siebente Vorlesung" in *Sämmtliche Werke*, 2. Abt. Vol. 2 *Philosophie der Mythologie*, Stuttgart 1857, p. 138. (after 1830). See also Burkert, "Griechische Mythologie , p. 163; on the differences between Schelling and Creuzer see Gockel, "Mythologie als Ontologie".

influential for so long and had become common currency during the Enlightenment. His contemporary G.W.F. Hegel created a large-scale variant of this *Stufentheorie*, and it was this idealist, stage by stage account of history which led Bachofen back to the *Symbolik*. Creuzer's *Stufentheorie* was limited to the development of myth, but it also offered the reader a view of the origin of religion and culture. Creuzer devoted a considerable number of pages to the way in which the mystical content of the symbol produced the demand for myth, whereupon the elementary myth was transformed into a ramified complex of ever expanding myths. It is evident that Creuzer interpreted this organic transformation from an essential connectedness to proliferation as a deterioration in the strength of the religious experience.[55] The development of mythology contained a transformation of a cultural historical nature which eventually resulted in an alienation of the symbol in Greek religion. Creuzer therefore set myth within the framework of a historical process, but he did not regard the historical change itself as a source of mythology. The diversity of mythical narratives, as an expression of the changeable nature of history, did violence to the unity of the symbolic idea.

The *Symbolik* provoked violent reactions. Some members of the public, including many students, were more than enthusiastic, but Creuzer was heavily criticized by a number of prominent colleagues. His Heidelberg colleague Joh. H. Voss even began an extremely vitriolic opposition, which he crowned with the publication of an *Antisymbolik* in 1824. Though their tone was more academic, the major classical scholars rejected Creuzer's approach.[56] The most important figure in this debate was K.O. Müller, whose publications will be dealt with later in this chapter.

This was the background to Creuzer's treatment of the Amazons. According to his hypothesis, that cultural stratum in which the symbolic and mythological attitude was paramount was deeply preoccupied with nature, especially the sun and moon and fertility.

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[55] *Symbolik*, 2nd ed. I, pp. 88–89.

[56] Joh. H. Voss (1751–1826); on the main lines of the debate see Howald, *Der Kampf*, which includes a discussion of Gottfried Hermann (1772–1848), *Ueber das Wesen und die Behandlung der Mythologie. Ein Brief an Herrn Hofrat Creuzer*, Leipzig 1819, part of which can be found in K. Kerényi, *Die Eröffnung des Zugangs zum Mythos. Ein Lesebuch*, Darmstadt 1967 (WdF 20), pp. 59–61. In this treatise, Hermann takes all non-Greek elements to be irrelevant for Greek mythology.

Where the spiritual and sensuous value of the symbol was still experienced to the full, rituals were to be found which manifestly represented masculinity and femininity and even incorporated them in ecstatic rites. Creuzer interpreted the Amazons in connection with the cult of Artemis in Ephesos:

> We have found ecstatic choruses of women [. . .] in Comana, Mabog and elsewhere, in the worship of the Asiatic goddess of nature. Thus at Ephesus, the Amazons appear in just this guise in the oldest cult. They reached there from the Black Sea and the Caucasus. Even today, there reigns in those countries a fanatical veneration for the moon. In the Chercassian tongue, the moon is still known as Maza. Is it not possible that the word derives from that? This is affirmed by Sprengel[57] in the Apology of Hippocrates (II, p. 597). The Libyan Amazon saga also points to moon worship. The sacred city spared by the warlike people is called [Mènè], the town of the moon (Diodor. III, 153). But the mythical tale of the breast which they mutilated (from [a] and [mazos] etc.) or which they removed from their children, is too persistent and widespread among the Greeks not to have some hidden germ of truth lying within it. Is not thereby indicated the idea of abstinence, to which enraptured female moon worshippers from time to time dedicated themselves?[58]
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> According to those vestiges just touched upon, the accounts of nature worship would be founded upon the frequency with which this sometimes periodic, sometimes lifelong, abstinence recurs. The warlike characterizes many a religion of the early world; as regards the removal of the breast, the point of the reversal of the relations between the sexes may also consist in the fact that men wore women's clothing and oft times suffered the woman's role.(*) This latter phenomenon appears in sun worship, whereby the Sun God is revered as an androgyne. In moon worship, the moon-hermaphrodite had to be venerated by the masculine activity of the women, by their taking up arms, and practising war.[59]
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> > * [. . .] (I have in mind) the purely symbolic sense of the saga. The characteristic idea of the Amazon was a virago, warlike, involved in star worship; just as the eunuch (Gallos, Combabos etc.) in the same ecstatic astral rites sought to represent the feminine within man. The Amazons were martial [hierodoulai], and whereas the [hierodoulai] of nature wanted to do rever-

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[57] K. Sprengel (1766–1833), physician, botanist and theologian: *Versuch einer pragmatischen Geschichte der Arzneikunde*, Halle 1792–1803, 5 vols.

[58] *Symbolik*, 2nd ed. 1819, II, pp. 172–173.

[59] *Symbolik* 2nd ed. 1819, II, pp. 174–175.

> ence to the gods of Sun and Moon by the sacrifice of the bloom of their youth, so this warlike troop of maidens was prepared to prove—by foregoing their maternal role and by their readiness for combat—not only that the Baalim and Astaroth fight the dark forces of night and winter, but also that they are periodically unfruitful.—The account related above of religious practices in Aphaka in the Lebanon leaves us no room for doubt that this swapping of gender also degenerates into the acts wherein man becomes woman and woman man.[60]

This interpretation of the Amazon myth reveals a number of important facets of Creuzer's treatment of mythology. First, it posits the existence of a cultural stratum which has become almost invisible and can only be detected by a close reading of the ancient texts. Second, as a corollary, it entails the decipherment of the later myths in order to reveal the original, symbolic idea.[61] Natural symbolism plays a crucial role in this process. While nature was generally held to be the ultimate measure of thought and experience at the peak of the Romantic era, Creuzer elevated it to the status of guiding principle of his mythology. He thereby made a signal contribution to the establishment of the so-called natural symbolism school, although this acquired a different character in the hands of its most famous exponent, F. Max Müller. Third, Creuzer makes creative use of comparative etymology to detect and explain these phenomena. He conscientiously compares his own derivations with those of other scholars.[62] Although the method and arrangement of his treatment of myth is in accordance with the dominant ideas of the time, the novel feature of the *Symbolik* lies in the application of these elements in order to demonstrate the idea in the myth. This single, symbolic world is the reality behind the myths and must be understood as a reality of the past.

In this way, Creuzer gives the Amazon myth a peculiar twist:

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[60] *Symbolik* II, p. 175 n. 225.

[61] "(This..) demonstrates that in his [Pindaros'] time the key to true enlightenment had already been lost. If perhaps pictorial expressions of old Greek songs had undergone this fate, how much more what is strange must underlie the misunderstanding. *A whole crowd of sagas has in particular quite demonstrably proceeded from the enfolding cover of the symbol and the silent discretion of the hieroglyph.*" *Symbolik*, II, p. 85 (emphasis added).

[62] For example, with the survey in Pougens, *Spéculum du Trésor des origines et dictionnaire grammatical raisonné de la langue française*, Paris 1819; *Symbolik* II, p. 173 n. 223.

the Amazons did actually exist in the natural symbolic culture which united every region of the ancient world. They were full members of this cultural stratum and fulfilled a function in it which expressed the essence of this culture. It is therefore only appropriate that Creuzer's treatment of the Amazons begins with their role in the cult of Artemis at Ephesos and as legendary founders of cities in Asia Minor.[63] Creuzer also deals with the question of the location of these cults:

> When I say Upper Asia, I mean the original seat of this religion. The next transplantation took place from the coastal lands of the Black Sea. Frequent mention of the Amazons in the Ephesian cult is witness to this. It was the first Hyperborean women who had brought the first knowledge of this belief from the Orient and had dedicated the oldest carving to the great Ephesian goddess.[64]

His interpretation of the Amazons themselves is concise: "die eigentliche Idee" is masculinity, which the Amazons stressed as priestesses of the lunar cult in a fertility ritual. This reconstruction of the "real" Amazons offers an explanation of the nature of the myth; its meaning coincides with the discovery of its hidden origin. The stories about the fights between Amazons and Greek heroes now belong as such to that stage of the ramification in which the original symbolic myth has joined up with saga. Some myths involving male heroes, on the other hand, have a mystical core in solar symbolism: for instance, Perseus' struggle against the Gorgons is a battle of the solar cult against the forces of darkness. Both solar and lunar cult are exponents of the same culture,[65] in which masculinity and femininity are subsumed as complementary essences under the single category of religion.

Creuzer's interpretation of the Amazons as figures from the cultural stratum of natural symbols is extremely important. The significance of his idealist principles is in contrast with the more positivist tendency which identified the Amazons as a special case. However, if Creuzer's interpretation is compared with the main tendencies in the source material, one is struck by the extent to which he has adjusted it to match his view of the myth.

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[63] *Symbolik*, II, pp. 114–115. Creuzer therefore regards the report that the Amazons were given asylum in the temple of Artemis (Paus. VII, 2, 4ff., who refers to Pindaros) as the original version, which was recorded later.

[64] *Symbolik*, II, pp. 115–116.

[65] *Symbolik*, II, pp. 175–176.

First, the critics of the *Symbolik* are right in claiming that Creuzer's treatment of the material pays scant attention to the chronological sequence of the texts. The same is true of his interpretation of the Amazon myth: the heroic tales, which Creuzer attributes to the later ramifications of the actual symbolic core, are already attested in Homeric epic, which is earlier than the Amazons' connections with the temple at Ephesos.[66] Furthermore, the corpus of testimonia offers little grounds for supposing that the cult of the lunar goddess Artemis formed the kernel of the myth. The eponymous stories begin very indistinctly and on a small scale towards the end of the archaic period, increase to some extent in the course of the classical period, and only assume impressive proportions in the Hellenistic period. The first to connect the Amazons with the shrine of Artemis was apparently Pindaros in the fifth century.[67] However, the picture is dominated by the stories of the battle between Greek heroes and Amazons; they expand both qualitatively and quantitatively from the sixth century on, and undeniably continue to form the major context for the Amazon myth. Even the fact that the Amazons were supposed to have obtained asylum in the sanctuary of Artemis at Ephesos, which is so crucial for Creuzer's argument, fits in with this martial tradition. Of course, the Amazon myth was not confined to armed combat; the eponymous stories cannot be directly connected with that aspect, and we are bound to admit that this feature of the Amazon myth has been neglected since Creuzer (with the exception of the researches of A. Klügmann, discussed below). Nevertheless, the claim that this tradition overshadows the heroic combat in importance is not borne out by the material—unless one follows Creuzer in appealing to a completely different principle of classification.

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[66] The development of the earliest stories about the Amazons and the related testimonia are discussed in the following chapters. The present remarks are confined to an outline of the main developments for the purposes of the argument at this point.

[67] See the passage from Pausanias (VII, 2, 4ff.) referred to above. Pausanias' reference to Pindaros is not confirmed by any other text. Incidentally, after citing Pindaros as the source for the report that the Amazons founded the sanctuary, Pausanias proceeds to refute it: the sanctuary must have been founded before their time, since they could count on it for asylum.

The idealist principle of Creuzer's interpretation of myth and the manner in which he arranged, assessed and interpreted his material are closed interlinked. The *Symbolik* strikingly illustrates the idea that the myth is not homologous with the significant cultural history, so that the myth was also situated in a different chronological framework from the dating of the ancient texts. This interpretation was based on the definition of myth as containing some historical elements, but for a greater part to be regarded as an element of the extra-historical past. This view was in accordance with the dominant paradigm of the time, and was therefore immune from substantial criticisms. It is therefore quite understandable why academic criticism concentrated on Creuzer's idiosyncratic chronology, and why the debate was inevitably confined to that area which could be subsumed within the historical framework.

Creuzer's principle of arrangement emerges all the more clearly if we examine the text of the *Symbolik* more closely. He records the key element of his view ("die eigentliche Idee") of the Amazons in an (extended) footnote, which is certainly in line with the main text, but also contains a more pregnant version of it. In the note the Amazons are represented as women who appear and act as men, and particularly devote themselves as such to sexual abstinence as "martial [hierodoulai]". This view can be interpreted as the result of a series of inversions. There is material—discussed by Creuzer[68]—on men who emasculated themselves and served as priests in the (fertility) rites of the Great Goddess; these men seem to have presented themselves as women. There are also known cases of women who served as temple prostitutes [hierodoulai][69] for the same reason; their locally and temporally circumscribed sexual excess was in the service of the fertility cult. As women who present themselves as men, the Amazons are thus the inversion of these Galloi or Eunuchs. In this representation, however, it is the martial element rather than the sexual, procreative element which comes to the fore. Sexuality is apparently associated primarily with femininity, while masculinity evokes the role of the warrior. In presenting the Amazons as female warriors, their sexuality is left out of account. They therefore also embody the inversion of the actual temple prostitutes, for they practice sexual continence instead of sexual excess. Creuzer's Amazons can now be recognized without any difficulty as the creatures of his own invention, produced by an inversion of the data on the Galloi and temple prostitutes. These Amazons are pure invention, since there is not a shred of evidence attesting to a function as temple prostitutes, whether in the normal form or in the form marked by sexual abstinence. It is probably significant that Creuzer placed his discussion in a footnote. This passage bears out the thesis that footnotes are primarily the place where the *source* of the interpretation is located.[70] In the present case, the source is not a historical document, but the imagination of the author in his search for the "eigentliche Idee" as the core of the myth.

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[68] Creuzer draws mainly on Strabon, XIV, 950A.

[69] On this meaning of the word [hierodoulos], see below, p. 58.

> No one, after a thoroughgoing perusal of this work, will deny that related ideas and views of the deity recur in the known peoples of the human race across history. These ideas and views, like the elements of language itself, are to be regarded as a legacy from the prehistoric epoch; ideas which very early on were embodied in symbols rich with meaning, but which were transmitted by a later period without comprehension and with a certain holy reticence, having outgrown that way of contemplating nature.
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> K.O. Müller on Creuzer's *Symbolik*, in *Kleine Schriften*, vol. II, Breslau 1848, p. 3.[71]

It is instructive to compare Creuzer's views with those of the polymath Karl Otfried Müller (1797–1840), whose work served as a standard throughout the nineteenth century. At the time of engaging in the discussion of the *Symbolik*, Müller had already acquired a reputation for his study of Aigina,[72] and he had recently been appointed as Professor in Altertumswissenschaft in Göttingen in 1819. This was also the period in which he was working on his large-scale *Geschichten Hellenischer Stämme und Städte*,[73] in which he made extensive use of mythological material. His inquiry was therefore very closely related to the theme of the *Symbolik*, but his approach was far removed from that of Creuzer.

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[70] The use of footnotes to indicate sources was common practice in the historiography of the period. This way of structuring historical texts reflects a specific view of the role of historians, their scientific reliability and their function as narrators. G. Pomata, "Versions of Narrative: Overt and Covert Narrators in Nineteenth Century Historiography", *History Workshop Journal* no. 27, 1989, pp. 1–17 refers in this connection to the French historian P. de Barante, who endeavoured to reduce this gap between the present and the past and the role of the historian as an intermediary by citing early documents as directly as possible and virtually avoiding all footnotes, pp. 6–7.

[71] K.O. Müller, *Kleine deutsche Schriften über Religion, Kunst, Sprache und Literatur, Leben und Geschichte des Alterthums.* Gesammelt etc. von Edu. Müller, nebst Erinnerungen aus dem Leben des Verfassers. Mit einer Karte. Breslau 1847–1848, 2 vols. II, p. 3.

Müller presented his views in two reviews of the controversial work, which had just received a revised edition.[74] The first consisted of an extensive review of the first two parts of the *Symbolik*. He made no attempt to disguise his admiration for Creuzer's tremendous achievement, and then proceeded to refute Creuzer's view of symbol and myth and his various interpretations of the myths. He rejected the idea that Greek mythology was nothing but an echo of a religion which came from elsewhere with the decisive argument of the interrelatedness of myth and language:

> Who taught the Greeks their distinctions of syntax, who taught the wise usage of their particles, who the most artful of all arts, language, if not the people's own genius?[75]

Myth and religion were certainly both derived from the same source, but it was myth in particular which displayed a sensitivity to specific historical circumstances:

> The gods appear in agrarian religions as the profound sources of blessing and prosperity, and people regard themselves as parts of Nature, whose fate is bound up with that of all other natural creatures. In Greece all mysteries rest on this agrarian culture, and were thus necessarily repressed by the open Hellenic life; as *the true Hellenes, the Dorians* possessed and knew no mysteries.[76]

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[72] K.O. Müller, *Aegineticorum Liber*, Breslau 1817.

[73] K.O. Müller, *Geschichten Hellenischer Stämme und Städte*. I. *Orchomenos und die Minyer*, Breslau 1820; 1844/2); II–III, *Die Dorier*, Breslau 1824.

[74] K.O. Müller, "Friedrich Creuzer's Symbolik und Mythologie. Mit einem Heft Abbildungen zum ganzen Werk auf 60 Tafeln und mit mehrern eingedruckten Holzschnitten. Leipzig und Darmstadt 1819. Zweite völlig umgearbeitete Ausgabe. Th.I S.iv. u. 799. II. 1006 in 8.", in *Kleine Schriften*, vol. II, pp. 3–20.

[75] Ibidem, p. 5.

[76] Ibidem, p. 7 (emphasis added).

Time and again Müller drew attention to the arbitrary and impressionistic character of Creuzer's explanations. The drift of his criticisms in this article is summed up in the following remark:

> Where an historical interpretation offers itself so clearly, one can scarcely prefer to seek a physical interpretation.[77]

Müller's second review was no longer intended as a point-by-point criticism of Creuzer.[78] Instead, Müller distanced himself from the so-called rational, but above all inflexible critics who reduce every difference of opinion to a simple rejection.[79] On the contrary, he admired Creuzer's speculative bent:

> Thus, it is not learning, not the imparting of intellectual thought as such which myth has as its object; rather it proceeds from a sensibility in which all inner life, normally linked to external facts, is necessarily represented by persons and deeds which are the object of literal belief... It is clear that a certain rapture is necessary for the mythologist, and for the writer too. In giving himself over to this, it redounds to his credit rather than blame, though of course a great deal of room is then left for the free play of the subjective.[80]

Nevertheless, it is clear from the opening of this citation that he found Creuzer's notion of a priestly doctrine unacceptable. He noted that his differences of opinion with Creuzer were so profound that he could not read a page without disagreeing with him. There was therefore no point in criticizing the *Symbolik* in greater detail.[81]

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[77] Ibidem, p. 10.

[78] K.O. Müller, "Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker besonders der Griechen, von Dr.Friedrich Creuzer, Professor der alten Litteratur zu Heidelberg. Zweite völlig umgearbeitete Ausgabe. Dritter und Vierter Theil. Leipzig und Darmstadt 1821. S. VI 569. S. XXVI. 747. in Octav.", in *Kleine Schriften*, vol. II, pp. 21–25.

[79] Müller also reviewed the *Antisymbolik* by Joh. H. Voss, Stuttgart 1824 S.408.8., *Kleine Schriften*, vol. II, pp. 25–30. This book contained a collection of articles, published between 1819 and 1823, which vigorously opposed the *Symbolik.* Voss also interpreted Creuzer's work as a Catholic offensive, which he wanted to rebut in the name of Protestantism. Müller refused to take up an explicit stance on the tone of the *Antisymbolik*, despite the temptation to do so, p. 25. He confined his remarks to a few specific points of detail.

[80] Müller, "Symbolik III u. IV", pp. 22–23.

[81] Ibidem, p. 21. Müller's criticisms of Creuzer resulted in relations between the two scholars and their colleagues which were wary but not embittered;

Instead, as we can see in retrospective, Müller followed a different course. He began an independent study of mythology, which resulted in the publication of his *Prolegomena zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie. Mit einer antikritische Zugabe* in 1825. Two factors would appear to have contributed to this decision: the criticisms which had been made of his book *Die Dorier* (1824); and his interventions in the discussion of the *Symbolik*. As to the first of these factors, he responded at length to the criticisms with an account and explanation of his premises. Perhaps the title of his reaction to the articles which had been directed against *Die Dorier*—he used the term "Antikritiken"[82]—contains an implicit reference to the second of these factors as well, suggesting as it does an echo of Voss' "Antikritik" of the *Symbolik*, which itself contained criticisms of Enlightened historicism. At any rate, despite the expansiveness and extensiveness of the *Prolegomena*, this work demonstrably harks back to the reading of the *Symbolik*, and in particular to Müller's second review article. For instance, he uses the phrase that myth contains "what has been thought and what has happened" to set out his own view of the "intrinsic concepts of myth".[83] No doubt Müller's discussion of mythology benefitted from the discussions of Creuzer's work, if only by being able to adopt a position against it. At the same time, however, Müller's interpretation of the Amazon myth betrays a direct indebtedness to the *Symbolik*. Since discussion of this point has to be set against the background of the differences between Creuzer and Müller, we shall begin with a brief account of the *Prolegomena*.[84]

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see O. Kern, *Aus dem amtlichen und wissenschaftlichen Briefwechsel von Carl Otfried Müller. Ausgewählte Stücke mit Erläuterungen*, Göttingen 1936, for example the letter from F.C. Schlosser (1776–1861) in Heidelberg to Müller, dated 1.4.1823: "If you would be so good as to visit us, I would take it most kindly; and you won't get into any collisions with Creuzer, he's allowing the *Symbolik* to follow its course [. . .]".

[82] K.O. Müller, *Prolegomena zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie. Mit einer antikritische Zugabe*, Göttingen 1825, pp. viff, pp. 1ff. The term "Antikritik" was not uncommon at this time, but that does not exclude a deliberate choice for a title of this kind.

[83] In the original "das Gedachte und das Geschehene" and "innere Begriffe des Mythus", Müller, *Prolegomena*, p. 70.

[84] K.O. Müller, his work, predecessors and influence were the subject of a conference held in Pisa in 1984, resulting in the publication of a series of extensive and specialized articles in *ANSP* s.III, vol. XIV, 1984. The following contributions are relevant to the present discussion: M. Sassi, "Ermeneutica del mito in K.O. Müller", pp. 911–936; G. Arrigoni, "Il maestro del maestro

Müller's *Prolegomena* was intended to achieve more than just steering a middle course between Creuzer and his leading opponents.[85] The title of the work has been connected with the *Prolegomena ad Homerum* by F.A. Wolf (1795); Müller had been a pupil of Wolf, and was heavily influenced by the latter's view of Altertumswissenschaft.[86] All the same, the differences between Müller and Wolf were so great[87] that it seems unlikely that the later work is intended as a tribute to Wolf. Burkert[88] and Momigliano[89] have correctly identified Müller's reference to Immanuel Kant's *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können* (Riga 1783). Although Momigliano regards the affinity between the two works as skin-deep,[90] Müller's *Prolegomena* does correspond to Kant's work in various ways. First, both scholars begin with the defence of an earlier work against critics, Kant in defence of his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1781), Müller in defence of his *Orchomenos* and *Die Dorier* (1820; 1824)—hence his "Antikritik". Second, each of them attempted to elevate a theme

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e i loro continuatori: mitologia e simbolismo animale in K.W.F. Solger, K.O. Müller e dopo", pp. 937–1020; A. Wittenburg, "I Dori di K.O. Müller", pp. 1031–1044; and E. Campanile, "Le lingue dell' Italia antica nella visione di K.O. Müller", pp. 1147–1160.

[85] See too Sassi, "Ermeneutica".

[86] Pfeiffer, *Scholarship*, p. 186, "obviously in imitation of the title of Wolf's most famous book on Homer". On the significance of Wolf's *Prolegomena* see also F.A. Wolf, *Prolegomena to Homer, 1795*. A. Grafton, G.W. Most and J.E.G. Zetzel. tr. and ed. Princeton 1985.

[87] Müller attended Wolf's lectures, but he felt himself to be very remote from the renowned Greek scholar, according to the biographical outline provided by his brother Eduard. This lack of affinity was partly connected with purely personal factors, viz. the animosity between Wolf and Müller's tutor Ph.A. Boeckh (1785–1867), whom Müller held in high esteem, but it was as much due to a difference of opinion: "On the one hand my brother found that however great an intellectual figure Wolf may have been, he did not possess, neither in his lectures at that time nor yet in his writings, any of that broad conception of antiquity, that pure historical conception which gathered together all detail into a firmly interconnected whole, towards which his innermost strivings urged him [. . .]" E. Müller, "Biographische Erinnerungen an Karl Otfried Müller", in K.O. Müller, *Kleine Schriften*, p. xx.

[88] Burkert, "Griechische Mythologie", p. 164.

[89] Momigliano, "K.O. Müller's *Prolegomena*", p. 671.

[90] Momigliano limits the influence of Kant's *Prolegomena* to its title and to the influence of the Kantian Gottfried Hermann on Müller's ideas, "K.O. Müller's *Prolegomena*", p. 671. Müller himself makes modest reference to the affinity with Kant's work: the title of his book may be overweaning, especially since it "recalls a more important philosophical work"; he therefore avoids a direct comparison between the two *Prolegomena*, but "Mythology is in need of something similar *precisely now*." *Prolegomena*, p. V (emphasis added).

of general theoretical interest, related to the respective earlier work and in danger of falling into disrepute, to an academic level by taking criticisms into account and providing a reasoned system. That Kant's metaphysical programme was concerned with methods of reasoning and judgement, while Müller's mythological programme was concerned with the possibility of deriving specific information from mythology and its interpretation, in no way invalidates the correspondence. Müller too dealt extensively in his *Prolegomena* with the faculties inherent in the human mind which can result in scientific knowledge about myths. The structure of Müller's *Prolegomena* may help to explain why this work was to exert such an influence on the study of mythology, for the main lines of his programme which was declared scientific were modelled on Kant's system, while at the same time it also complied with certain important Romantic prerequisities, as we shall see. Furthermore, since Müller's reaction to the *Symbolik* had contributed to the conception of the *Prolegomena*, and since the Amazon myth fulfilled a specific function within this reaction, the latter cannot be considered without an introduction to the context in which it was embedded. Nevertheless, I shall confine my remarks to those aspects of Müller's work which may throw light on his treatment of the Amazon myth, without going into the question of the traces of Kant's work in the *Prolegomena* or the debate with contemporary students of mythology[91] in any further detail.

Müller begins with an extrinsic notion of myth:

> [. . .] tales of the deeds and fates of individual creatures, which according to their coherence and the way they are interwoven, relate to an earlier epoch, quite sharply distinct from the history of Greece proper.[92]

The first insights must be derived from an understanding of this form: the narrative is an essential component, all phenomena are represented as persons, and events appear to have become detached from history. An understanding of this extrinsic form, however, is impossible without an intrinsic understanding, which is attained step by step. The real and the ideal are closely connected in myth; the degree to which they are interconnected is a gauge of the antiquity of the myth. This combination of experience and thought indicates that:

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[91] For an extensive discussion see J.H. Blok, "Romantische Poesie, Naturphilosophie, Construktion der Geschichte. K.O. Müller's Understanding of History and myth", in *K.O. Müller Reconsidered*, W. Calder III, H. Flashar and R. Schlesier, ed. Urbana (forthcoming).

[92] *Prolegomena*, p. 59.

> [. . .] the mythical form of expression, which turns all creatures into people and all relationships into acts, [is] so characteristic that we must ascribe to its development a particular epoch of the culture of a people.[93]

Müller regards this mythical form of expression as the special quality of the earlier period; it is a particular capacity that cannot be compared with anything else and certainly cannot be understood as allegory or lack of rationality.

> We are here concerned with a way of looking at the world which is foreign to our own, and into which it is often difficult to translate oneself; it is not the business of historical research into myth to look for the causes of this outlook; it should be left to the highest of all the historical sciences, to a history of the Human Spirit, a history whose inner coherence has scarcely been guessed at.[94]

To sum up the argument of the *Prolegomena*, Müller regards the core of myth as consisting of the mythopoetic capacity which is independent of the range of history. Since in the last resort myths refer to themselves and provide the key to their own interpretation, mythology poses enormous hermeneutic problems to the researcher.[95] But this mythopoetic sensibility[96] finds expression in contact with geographical and historical circumstances. This expression is certainly a historical object. This faculty further develops its creativity under specific circumstances, in a very early period and particularly during migrations. The origin of myths is therefore due to an interaction between this special mental faculty and the historical experiences of the people in question. Once they have emerged in this way in the early dawn of history, myths develop in contact with history. This can be seen, for instance, from the literary adaption which they undergo over the years, especially in Greece. Myths record the earliest experiences of a people in a specific way,[97] and then become a part of cultural history in a wide sense. Many of the extant ancient testimonia reveal precisely such a modification of the original mythical core to later historical developments. It is the task of the student of mythology to investigate this historical development of myth. In this respect, it calls for a thorough knowledge of cultural history in order to be able to trace the development of the extrinsic form.

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[93] *Prolegomena*, p. 78. In this connection Müller refers to the decipherment of myths.

[94] *Prolegomena*, p. 121.

[95] On Müller's contact with and admiration for F.D.E. Schleiermacher, one of the founders of the notion of the hermeneutic circle, see the biographical sketch of Müller by his brother, Eduard Müller, in *Kleine Schriften*, I, pp. xxxviiiff.

[96] See above, p. 49.

Since in the first and last instance myths are expressed in language, philological analysis, particularly etymology, is one of the most important methods for recovering the mythic core. However, the etymologist must concentrate on the language of the culture in question and avoid searching for foreign elements:[98] the myth, after all, is an expression of the historical experiences of the people that has created it. Also important are the history of religion and a familiarity with the geographical setting in which the people in question lived. The latter prerequisite is connected with the need to connect the earliest version of a myth with a particular locality in order to understand which natural elements have been incorporated by the mythopoetic faculty. Given the linguistic character of myths, Müller attaches less importance to archaeological evidence in the work of the student of mythology. He regards the visual arts as a derivation from myth, and though they have a value in themselves, they cannot serve as instruments for the investigation of the original meaning of the myth.

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[97] Müller repeatedly refers to the childhood of man and the childlike language of myth. In doing so, he explicitly rejects any association with "incapacity", for he recognizes the mythopoetic faculty as a factor with a value of its own. The organic imagery is thus not simply intended to indicate immaturity in a negative sense. Similarly, the passage on the "Geschichte des menschlichen Geistes" cited above is open to interpretation as referring both to a process of change and to a developmental process from a lesser to a greater degree of articulation. Müller's appreciation of the mythopoetic stage of culture is thus somewhat ambiguous; the same ambivalence is reflected in the term "childlike", which evokes both immaturity and "fresh and full of vitality [. . .] their origin [as yet] in distant epochs", *Prolegomena*, p. 121. His judgement on this stage of culture certainly betrays a Romantic attachment to children as innocent and unspoilt beings.

[98] Momigliano notes the existence of a Blut-und-Boden ideology in Müller's thought, but in the light of Müller's gentleness he is inclined to regard this as a harmless phenomenon, "K.O. Müller's *Prolegomena*", p. 674.

If we now proceed to compare the work of Creuzer and Müller, we can detect the existence of the same elements: a Romantic receptivity to the experience of nature and speculative views on the human spirit, on the one hand; and the importance of historical approaches within philological Altertumswissenschaft, on the other. The main differences lie in the weight attached to these elements. In Creuzer's *Symbolik* the disciplinary approaches to the ancient texts were subordinated to the former component; it was the premise of the original symbolism, taken to express the essence of the human spirit, which was to serve as a principle of arrangement and interpretation of the ancient texts. For Müller, on the other hand, the historical framework of the texts continued to function as the basis for the reconstruction of the mythopoetic moment.[99]

The differences between the two systems emerge clearly from Müller's explicit reactions to Creuzer's text and from the summary of the *Prolegomena.* While Creuzer held the symbol to be the essence and regarded myth as derivative, Müller treated them both as parts of the same expressive system. And while Creuzer emphasized the oriental world of ideas and the role of the priestly class in the creation of mythology, Müller saw every mythology as the historical and organic product of a single culture. There was no priestly class in Greece, but it was the mythopoetic faculty of the entire people which had created Greek mythology. The two scholars also differed in their attitude to the historical factor. Creuzer's mythopoetic stage of culture had no clear-cut chronological contour and depended on his extremely vague *Stufentheorie.* Müller, on the other hand, tied the most important period in the creation of myth to a specific chronological setting: the period of migrations around the beginning of the first millennium B.C., a period whose historical character was difficult for the Greeks themselves to understand, but which certainly was a part of Greek cultural history in analytical terms. The mythopoetic faculty itself was external to history, but the myth that it produced was a part of history. Müller was therefore able to retain the characteristic of myth as a phenomenon which belongs simultaneously to two worlds, past and history, what has been thought ("das Gedachte") and what has happened ("das Geschehen").

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[99] Religious orientations also played an important part. Creuzer's arch-enemy Voss erroneously believed that Creuzer was a Catholic, reading the *Symbolik* as a plea for the non-historical veracity of the dogmas and thus for the Roman Catholic church. Müller, on the other hand, came from a pietist Protestant background, in which religious worship centred on a self-conscious contemplation of the biblical texts and on prayer. For the impact of Müller Pietism on his historical views, see my "Romantische Poesie, Naturphilosophie, Construktion der Geschichte".

The debate which Creuzer and Müller conducted in their writings was more than a brief difference of opinion within a small circle of scholars in Germany. The study of mythology, with its search for the core of human creative, linguistic and imaginative faculties, had exerted an influence on philosophy and historiography. The *Symbolik* and the *Prolegomena* thus resembled one another to the extent that they took the historicising context in which these disciplines developed into account. Nonetheless, they displayed very different approaches to cultural history. The criticisms of the *Symbolik* by Müller and others expelled Romantic idealism from the academic field. The paths of inquiry diverged: the predominantly rationalist approach to history and myth, practised as a discipline in universities and other research centres, on the one hand; and the interest in phenomena beneath the surface of cultural history, labelled speculative and unorthodox by its opponents, on the other.[100] In this way, the difference between history and the past was reflected in the character of research itself and in the manner in which it was organized.

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[100] Burkert, "Griechische Mythologie", pp. 162–163 provides a concise summary of this process: "Durch die Wirkung Herders und dann der Romantik wuchs das Interesse für das Geheimnissvolle und Uralte der Volkstraditionen, wuchs freilich auch die kritisch-historische Wissenschaft; und es ist kein Zufall, dass gerade auf dem Gebiet der Mythologie rationale Wissenschaft und romantisch-theologische Spekulation aneinandergerieten: im Streit um Creuzers "Symbolik" traten dem alten Aufklärer Johann Heinrich Voss die jungen Wissenschaftler Christian August Lobeck und Carl Otfried Müller zur Seite, und ihnen gehörte die Zukunft, auch wenn Schelling in seinen Vorlesungen über Mythologie und Offenbarung die metafysisch-spekulative Richtung bis in die 40er Jahre weitertrug und die philosophische Respektabilität des Mythos bis ins 20. Jahrhundert rettete. [. . .] also wendet die Philologie hinweg von der Mythologie [. . .]. 1926 urteilte dann freilich Ernst Howald, dass der "Sieg des Rationalismus über die Romantik [. . .] die Klassische Philologie aus dem Kreise der lebendigen und auf die Gesamtkultur wirkenden Wissenschaften gerissen hat". Cited in Howald, *Der Kampf um Creuzers Symbolik*, p. 22.

This is the background against which to consider Müller's interpretation of the Amazon myth. He mentions the Amazons in two passages. The first is from *Orchomenos* (1820), where in a discussion of Libyan legends and cults in connection with the voyage of the Argonauts, he refers to Herodotos' account of the Ausees (IV, 180).[101] They organized armed combats for young girls in honour of a goddess, whom the Greeks who lived there referred to as Athena. Müller—not Herodotos—calls these girls "Amazonian" and adds:

> But are not the Amazons themselves—[hierodoulai] of valiant deities—originally worshippers of Boiotian Enyo? At least in part. Thus they appear in the old Attic myths as a neighbouring people, like the Thrakians of Eumolpos. There was an Amazonicon in Boiotia too.* And are not Thermodon and Triton, the two Amazon rivers, both to be found together in Boiotia, here, moreover, in the context of deadly combats of Amazons, and the cult of battle-ready goddesses?*2
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> * Steph. (Byz.) [Amazonion].
> 2 S. Douris on Plout. Demosth. 19 (Theseus 12) concerning a stone relief found in Boiotia, which represented Thermodon holding a wounded Amazon in his arms.[102]

Müller returns to the Amazons in *Die Dorier* in a discussion of the various forms of the goddess Artemis. He begins with the nature of her worship, which is orgiastic and ecstatic and goes back to a "certain stage of nature worship where man, suddenly seized of the sensuous life of nature, seeks to disencumber himself of his consciousness of the latter."[103] He then proceeds to distinguish carefully the Greek versions of this cult, such as those of Artemis in Brauron and of Artemis Orthia in Sparta, from those cults "whose origins are Asiatic and non-Greek in the literal sense, and which are quite clearly to be distinguished from the Doric and indeed from the Arcadian worship of Artemis."[104]

The main goddess of the latter type is the Ephesian Artemis, the most prominent of a large number of similar goddesses in the Asiatic hinterland. The cult of Artemis at Ephesos, known for the symbol of the bee and the castrated priests who served the goddess, was supposed to have been founded by the Amazons. At this point Müller briefly discusses the eponymous sagas of the coastal cities of Asia Minor. Then, step by step, he draws on an enormous variety of testimonia as he traces the origin of the Amazons further and further to the East, to the territory of Syria.[105] He tries to find a goddess of their original cult who is both Nature Mother and Enyo, who both nurtures and disturbs nature.

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[101] Cf. S. Ribichini, "'Athena' Libica e le *Parthenoi* del Lago Tritonis (Her. IV, 180)", *SSR* 2, 1978, pp. 39–60.
[102] Müller, *Orchomenos*, p. 357.
[103] Müller, *Dorier*, p. 386.
[104] Müller, *Dorier*, pp. 387–388.

> And what setting could better serve for the fatherland of Artemis Ephesia, and of the warrior [hierodoulai], than Kappadokia? Where the hierarchies of the priests had extended and maintained themselves into the historical epoch with countless male and female [hierodouloi], where there flourished a shamanistic-orgiastic cult of nature, and where the chief deity was both Enyo and Magna Mater? If we have thus made a connection between the cult currently under examination and the neighbouring branch, yet we can in no wise disavow the fact that almost all manifestations—which are seen at Ephesos only in milder form—take on an exceptionally gruesome and repulsive aspect wherever the Syrian/Aramaic tribe extended.[106]

The idea that the Amazons were [hierodoulai] was not invented by Müller;[107] we have already come across Creuzer's highly individual interpretation. The term "temple slaves" is neutral in itself, and the word [hierodouloi] does not appear to have a special connotation in the citation from *Orchomenos*. In *Die Dorier*, however, the context of an ecstatic nature cult and the presence of castrated priests lends the term a sexual connotation.[108] In this respect Müller shares the common idea that female temple slaves were primarily intended to serve as temple prostitutes.[109] The emphasis on the non-Greek excesses of this form of worship reinforces this association. A different, "asiatic" cult of Artemis which Müller discusses after the passage quoted above, is taken to be characterized by "exalted, immoral dances".[110]

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[105] Not modern Syria, but North-East Anatolia, inhabited by the so-called White Syrians.

[106] Müller, *Dorier*, pp. 391–392.

[107] Müller himself refers without further comment to his tutor Boeckh, p. 390 n. 3.

[108] "[. . .] (the) sight of great bevies of female temple servants, [hierodoulai], as they were customarily found in Asiatic temples." *Dorier*, p. 390.

[109] "[. . .] and wherever they had their temple, thither repaired at all times a great crowd of foreigners by reason of their vow, or, more likely, to satisfy their lust with the whores dedicated to the service of such a goddess." J.H. Zedler, *Universallexikon*, Halle und Leipzig 1733, s.v. Comana. The text refers to the authoritative work by Chr. Cellarius, *Notitiae Orbis Antiqui, sive Geographiae*

If we consider this passage from *Die Dorier* as a whole, we find a striking resemblance to Creuzer's view of the Amazons. This can be seen in the first instance in the representation of an oriental, sexually defined temple slavery, though a change of emphasis has taken place: the lunar cult, androgyny and the ritual exchange of sex roles have disappeared, to be replaced by the evocation of unbroken ecstasy in a horrifying, menacing (castration!) and sensual cult. In Creuzer's version the Amazons served the goddess through sexual abstinence, while in Müller's version they have become [hierodouloi] in the current sense of the word, i.e. sexually incontinent figures, or even prostitutes. The fact that Müller is here giving Creuzer's interpretation, with a twist of his own, can also be seen from the priority assigned by both scholars to the connections between the Amazons and Artemis, rather than to the heroic narratives involving combat between Greeks and Amazons. As indicated above,[111] the extant material does not support this perspective.

The close correspondences between the two texts are also revealed in the reception accorded Müller's interpretation of the Amazons. Müller refers to Kappadokia and nowhere mentions the city of Komana. The first to link the name Komana with the Amazons was Creuzer. Virtually nothing was known about Komana at the time of publication of the *Symbolik* and *Die Dorier* apart from information provided by the ancient written testimonia.[112]

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plenioris. Tomus alter, Asiam et Africam Antiquam exponens. etc. Amsterdam 1703–1706; 2nd edition: *Alteram hanc editionem annotationibus varii generis* etc. Leipzig s.a. vol. III, 8 par. 79, Comana.

[110] Müller, *Dorier*, p. 392.

[111] See above, p. 45.

[112] The city of Komana on the Iris, which flourished in the Hellenistic and Roman era rather than in the dawn of history, was discovered by William John Hamilton (1805–1867), a geologist who studied modern languages, history and other subjects in Göttingen until 1827 at the latest. It is extremely likely that he attended Müller's lectures in Göttingen, and at precisely the time that Müller was engaged with the material under discussion. From 1835 Hamilton went on archaeological and geological trips, which he reported extensively. His discovery of Komana was described in a publication on the area which appeared a few years after Müller's death: W.J. Hamilton, *Researches in Asia Minor, Pontus and Armenia, with some account of their Antiquities and Geology*, London 1842, 2 vols. (Komana and the Amazons in vol. I, p. 350).

The Greeks gave the goddess of Komana, Anaïtis or Ma, the name of the goddess Enyo, who was referred to as a deity of war in addition to Ares and Athena. She was held to be the personification of the war cry.[113] The location of the Amazons in Komana and the interpretation of their cult were at any rate often attributed to Müller, and as a result of his authority they came to form a fixed ingredient of the Amazon mythography, summed up by Roscher as follows:

> *O. Muller, Dorians, 1, 391,* has shown that for the Greeks the Amazon saga grew out of the cult, especially the acolyte organisation of the goddess of Comana on the Iris. Many have sanctioned this view, viewing the traits and combats of the Amazons in general as an extension of the worship of Asiatic Nature and Moon goddesses [. . .].[114]

There is yet another clue to Müller's reaction to Creuzer's text. A comparison of the passages in *Orchomenos* and *Die Dorier* throws an interesting light on Müller's own ideas about the Amazons. In *Orchomenos* he suggests that the Amazons are in fact [hierodoulai] of the Boiotian, i.e. Greek, goddess Enyo. The sexual associations of the word are absent here, and the Amazons are interpreted exclusively as martial figures. This interpretation is perfectly in accord with the principles which he was to lay down in the *Prolegomena*: he connects the Greek testimonia with a Greek cult in a Greek location. In fact, he goes even further, since he implicitly wonders whether Herodotos' account of the Ausees might not have been influenced by these Greek Amazons, whom Müller took to have actually existed in the service of the Boiotian goddess Enyo. However, he abandons all these principles in *Die Dorier*. Using the goddess Enyo as a *trait d'union* with the Ephesian Artemis, he situates the Amazons in a remote location in the

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The work appeared in German translation by the well-known traveller R. Schomburgk as *Reisen in Kleinasien*, 1843 (Komana and the Amazons in vol. I, p. 325).

[113] Cf. Hom. *Il.* V, 592; Strabon, XII, 535; 557; Plin. *NH* VI, 3.

[114] W.H. Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, 1884–1890, vol. I, p. 275. Moreover, Roscher adds Creuzer's cult of the lunar goddess without any comment. Nor was he the only one to do so: see E. Vinet in de *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines*, known by the name of the publishers Daremberg and Saglio (1877) s.v. Amazones, p. 221, where Creuzer's etymology is added to Müller's interpretation, though only the latter's name is mentioned.

East. There is explicitly nothing Greek about the Amazons any more; neither their location nor their goddess is Greek. They live in a mixed sexual community of [hierodouloi], and although they are still warriors, there is no longer any doubt about their sexually orientated way of life—they are promiscuous, even prostitutes.

This is a remarkable development. Although the Amazons are *exclusively* known from Greek mythic narratives, Müller goes against all his principles in relegating them to a non-Greek reality. He was to reject this point of view in the *Prolegomena*:

> Now it would be quite nonsensical to regard the myth of such a people as being proper to that people [sc. the Ethiopians] and in that sense to speak for instance of a Hyperborean myth. For the fundamental idea of the people mentioned,—a devout, pure, Apollon-worshipping people, living in the far North and yet in temperate brightness, because the North wind roars forth first from the gloomy cavities of the mountain range just to the south of there—their fundamental idea could not derive from their geography, not from the most inadequate understanding of it; there is no hint that this could have emerged from such (Dorians I. p. 267); it is pure idea.[115]

Yet the procedure that he rejects here is the very one that he applied to the Amazons. In the first instance he opted for a Greek myth, taken to reflect a reality while explicitly retaining a Greek setting. Later, however, he detached the Amazons completely from the Greeks, referring to the continuity in the existence of the Amazons, who still had descendants in the neighbourhood of the temple at Ephesos in historical times, on his reading of the ancient testimonia.[116] How are we to account for this radical and barely defensible volte-face?

Müller was working on *Orchomenos* during the period 1817–1819, while he was still in Breslau.[117] Although he must have been acquainted to some degree with the first edition of the *Symbolik*, it was the second edition, which appeared in 1819–1821, which he read most thoroughly and to which he devoted two review articles, each covering two volumes. The interpretation of the Amazons is to be found in volume II of the *Symbolik*, which was published in 1820. Müller began his work on Creuzer after the publication of *Orchomenos* and a number of other texts had been completed.[118] As he wrote to his friend Carl August Böttiger in a letter dated 21.11.1820:

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[115] *Prolegomena*, p. 227

[116] *Dorier*, p. 390.

[117] E. Müller, "Biographische Erinnerungen", *Kleine Schriften* I, p. xxxii.

> Here in Göttingen we are getting quite crowded. There'll soon be 1200 students here, it seems. Though this doesn't matter much to my small auditorium, which is adequately full with 20 attending. Also, I do not wish for more to demonstrate to my audience—as now—the rather crude sketches of a mythology which is only captured in its obscure beginnings. In this I have been following in every step of Herr Creuzer and have even begun Indian [i.e. Sanskrit]; in this regard we've acquired a valiant expert in Herr Franz Bopp, who's going to spend half a year here with us.[119]

In other words, Müller applied himself to Creuzer's interpretation of the Amazons after completing *Orchomenos*, and incorporated Creuzer's insights in his own particular way in *Die Dorier*, of which the first volume, containing the passages on the Amazons, was published in 1824. Here too he laid the foundation of his *Prolegomena.*

This reconstruction explains why Müller revised his initial interpretation. Creuzer's emphasis on the role of sexuality in the function of the Amazons as [hierodoulai] opened his eyes to this aspect, which he had apparently not "recognised" during his first investigations. He has even strengthened, inverted and expanded this sexual character. Figures of this kind had no place in Greek culture as Müller conceived it. His sharp distinction between Greek and oriental cultures with the wide divergence in their versions of Artemis leaves no room for doubt on this score. In Müller's view, the Amazons have become non-Greek orientals, and they are now historical figures instead of mythical ones. As far as the latter point is concerned, Müller assigns the Amazons an extra significance. They are not even subject to historical change, but form an ahistorical continuity. While for Müller culture was determined by the role of language (in myths, philological developments and in their literary adaptation), by its connection with a locality and by chronological development, his Amazons are outside the bounds of culture and Greek cultural history. This ahistorical character is closely connected with the primary experience of nature and with the self-abandonment to sexuality, of which the Amazons were the most salient exponents in Müller's eyes.

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[118] His many activities, lectures and publications in the years 1819–1820 are described by E. Müller, "Biographische Erinnerungen", *Kleine Schriften* I, pp. xlvi–xlviii.

[119] C.O. Müller, *Briefe aus einem Gelehrtenleben, 1797–1840. Band I, Die Texte der Briefe*, S. Reitner, ed., Berlin 1950, letter 22.

The background: the Amazons and cultural history in the early nineteenth century

Both Creuzer and Müller regarded the Amazons as people who had actually existed, but there were importance differences between their opinions as well. In order to arrive at a balanced assessment of their varying interpretations, however, it is first necessary to consider the image of the Amazons that was available to them for interpretation in the first place. This entails looking at the image of the Amazons that was current from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and at the way in which knowledge about the Amazons could change under the influence of the historicising paradigm. Only then can we return to Creuzer and Müller to examine their construction of Amazons living in the past more closely.

There are two main categories by which the female warriors were classified in the arrangement and interpretation of stories about the Amazons from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, which I shall refer to as *Amazones geographicae* and *Amazones juridicae*.

The former refers to Amazons, or Amazon-like women, who are taken to live in remote regions described in (travel) accounts and the corresponding visual representations. In short, this literature contains a fascinating collection of reports of women who are warriors or appear to have the upper hand over men, or of every conceivable variety of sexual and marital customs which may be taken to indicate an unusual degree of liberty on the part of women. These reports refer to the distant corners of the earth, especially the northern regions of South America, Mesoamerica, India, Tibet, and later the Iroquois tribes of North America. These ethnographies display a strong tendency to regard foreign cultures as examples of the "other", implicitly producing a heightened image of the culture of the writers themselves.[120] A reading of the ancient textual material exercised a profound influence on the recognition of "genuine" Amazons in cultures which were viewed as the opposite of Western culture.[121] It is therefore impossible to distinguish between the description of these "Amazons" in distant regions and the ethnographic discourse on the "other" which not only incorporated these accounts but was actually responsible for their very production. The importance allocated to the discovery of Amazons in these ethnographies is no coincidence, for these Amazons constituted a stark contrast to European sexual mores, the division of labour and the relations of power between the sexes.

These *Amazones geographicae* also acquired a function outside ethnography *stricto sensu*, since there was considerable discussion of the Amazons in legal debates, especially those relating to the theory of natural law. To avoid confusion, the latter will be referred to as *Amazones juridicae*. These legal theories were generally highly dependent on the ancient tradition. Thus where the term "Amazon" featured in the discussion, these testimonia occupied a position of importance. The *Amazones geographicae* then served as proof that this variant of human society did actually exist. In this respect there is a clear connection between geographical and legal discourse, apart from the fact that they both expressed the most important norms of European culture.

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[120] For a clear account of this process see P. Mason, "Notes on Cormorant Fishing: Europe and its Others", *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv*, n.s. 13, 1987, pp. 147–174; "Seduction from Afar: Europe's Inner Indians", *Anthropos* 82, 1987, pp. 581–601; "The Ethnography of the Old World Mind: Indians and Europe", *Anthropos* 84, 1989, pp. 549–554; on mainly internal European representations P. Vandenbroeck, *Beeld van de Andere, Vertoog over het Zelf*, Antwerp 1987, and in a wider theoretical setting P. Mason, *Deconstructing America. Representations of the Other*, London 1990. On the scholarly tradition in Western Europe, A. Grafton (with A. Shelford and N. Siraise), *New Worlds, Ancient Texts. The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery*, Cambridge, Mass./London 1992. See further my remarks on the concept of the "other" or the "Other" below, p. 126ff.

[121] On medieval and early modern reports of Amazons in remote regions see, for instance, W.P. Gerritsen, "De omgekeerde wereld van de Amazonen", in R.E.V. Stuip and C. Vellekoop, eds. *Middeleeuwers over vrouwen. Deel 1*, Utrecht 1985, pp. 157–176, with the literature mentioned there; for images from the early sixteenth century on, see P. Mason, "Classical Etnography in the Perception of the Peoples of the New World", in M. Reinhold, J.R. Fears and W. Haase, eds. *The Classical Tradition and the Americas*, Berlin/New York 1992, Vol. I, with the literature mentioned there; see further R. Schomburgk, "Ueber die Geschichte der Tradition von den Amazonen in Guiana, nebst einge Bemerkungen über den Amazonenstein", in *Monatsber. über die Verhandlungen der Ges. für Erdkunde z.Berlin*, NF3, 1846, pp. 27–38; R. Hennig, "Ueber die voraussichtlich völkerkundlichen Grundlagen der Amazonen-Sagen und deren Verbreitung", *Zeitschrift für Etnologie* 72, 1940, pp. 362–371; P. Samuel, *Amazones, Guerrières et Gaillardes*, Grenoble 1975 (translated and revised as *Amazonen, Kriegerinnen und Kraftfrauen*, Munich 1979) as samples of earlier approaches to the question.

It was this legal version of the Amazons that was most familiar to European scholars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is therefore appropriate to concentrate on the function of the *Amazones juridicae* for present purposes, bearing in mind that this concept included the *Amazones geographicae* as well. Both versions of the image of the Amazons will crop up in the later sections of this chapter in the discussion of the reaction of the historicising view of culture to this legacy.

The most important contribution of the theory of natural law in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is probably the way in which the main thinkers deliberately distanced themselves from the traditional legal systems. Law should be a reflection of and be scrutinised against a system that was not taken from the Christian, scholastic corpora, Roman law or local law, but that should be the result of logical, deductive reasoning. Various principles formed the basis of this line of argument, such as the need to take account of innate human affects in a coherent legal system in order to create a balance between what was recognized as the self-interest of the individual and his obligations to others. Natural law was therefore explicitly ahistorical; it was a construction aimed at universal principles, which was then commented on in the light of a fixed corpus of exempla deriving from Western traditions and ethnographic oddities.[122]

This theory assigned pride of place to contract entered into by individuals of equal status. In marriage law, this principle was tantamount to a declaration of equal rights for husband and wife in marriage. The legal theorists on the European continent in particular—S. Pufendorf (1632–1694), Chr. Thomasius (1655–1728) and Chr. Wolff (1679–1754)—concluded that the traditional *imperium maritale* (the dominion of a husband over his wife) was in contradiction to natural law. This revision of the marriage contract was made possible by the rejection of the church's argument that women, the daughters of Eve through sexuality and original sin, should remain under religious and secular tutelage.

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[122] I gratefully acknowledge my debt to U. Vogel (Manchester) for discussions of this subject.

Nevertheless, the theorists of natural law supported the subordination of the wife to the husband in marriage. Recognition that this was in conflict with natural law necessitated a lengthy justication of this decision. It is precisely this attempt to justify the inconsistency which offers an insight into that material which could only be adjusted to the logical structure of natural law by force. The wide-ranging and specialized arguments therefore betray a renewed concern with the problem of sexuality. However, it no longer appears in the Christian sense of a mortal sin, but as a capricious, irrational and powerful emotion which could undermine the logical structure of the law. Preoccupation with this affect is expressed in the striking variety of terms used to refer to the act of copulation, accompanied by an emphatic affirmation that the purpose of this act must be the procreation of legitimate offspring. Within this structure, concern about sexuality was thus concern about legal paternity.

Although the reason for this view of fatherhood has often been sought in the desire to transfer private property to legitimate children—an interpretation which occupies a prominent position in the work of John Locke, for instance—the motivation of the continental theorists of natural law would appear to have been of a different kind. They recognized that paternity also has an immaterial aspect, and they attributed equal importance to the need for a line of descent, family resemblance and spiritual continuity within a patriarchal family, reinforced by direct feelings of tenderness and belonging. They were therefore convinced that the only reason for a man to enter into the marriage contract arose from the desire for children which were his own without a shadow of doubt. Since from the first paternity was regarded as a less secure source of descent than maternity, the theorists of natural law regarded "fatherhood" as a contract. It gave the father a good many rights over his children, mitigated by a lesser number of obligations. These rights and obligations express the material and immaterial aspects of fatherhood; only because of the immaturity of the child, this contract could not satisfy the demand for equality between the partners.

The fatherhood contract was the basis of the marriage contract, which gave the man the right to the body and possessions of his wife. These theorists stated explicitly that the need for a legitimate fatherhood was at odds with the principle of equality implied in the model of the contract; it was to serve their own interests that men had to contravene the legal principles.

The possibility that women may feel bound by the marriage contract of their own rational will on the basis of legal equality does not arise in this argument. In this respect, the traditional representation of Eve still exerted an indirect influence. Nor did the logic of natural law firmly exclude the Roman definition of the female estate as *infirmitas*. Without the control exercised through marriage, the unbridled character of sexuality, it was supposed, might lead to the creation of a relationship of paternity with another man's child, involving a falsification of affect and contract. This was why the subordination of the woman to the man in marriage was indefensible on rational grounds, but was necessary in the interests of men themselves. As a result of the appeal to natural law as a logical system, on the one hand, and a perception of sexuality, especially female sexuality, which was in conflict with that natural law, on the other, the subordination of the woman to the man in marriage acquired the character of an appendix which could not occupy a proper place within the main fabric of the legal system.

The Amazons appeared as the absolute opposite to this construction of the legal subordination of the woman to patrilineal kinship.[123] They were legally autonomous, not subjected to a marriage contract or *imperium maritale*, and they were mistresses of their non-patrilineal kinship system. The "reality" of these *Amazones juridicae*, constructed on the basis of the ancient and geographical sources mentioned above, served as an extra argument for the correctness of the existing system. The Amazons were the embodiment of sexuality which was given free rein outside the patriarchal law of Europe. In this connection, it is striking that the Amazons were not just examples of unfettered female sexuality, a terrifying alternative. Of course, male marital fidelity was not a necessity in natural law, neither on logical grounds nor in the interests of the men themselves, but sexuality as such was held to be an extremely powerful emotion, which was precisely why female sexuality had to be subjected absolutely to the yoke of the law. Men too, it was believed, only entered into marriage because of the paternity contract. The Amazons therefore also evoked *male* liberty, as the embodiment of sexuality that was not regulated by law. These autonomous, sexually free, independent and martial *Amazones juridicae* were not just a target of abuse, for they also aroused feelings of astonishment or even admiration.[124] At any rate, the Amazons were situated on the very edge of what was conceivable in both geographical and legal terms. They were the incarnation of the ultimate alternative to the existing world.

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[123] See e.g. T. Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), ch. XX, Of Domion Paternall, and Despoticall: "In this condition of meer Nature, either the Parents between themselves dispose of the dominion over the Child by Contract; or they do not dispose thereof at all. If they dispose thereof, the right passeth according to the Contract. We find in History that the *Amazons* Contracted with the Men of the neighbouring Countries, to whom they had recourse for issue, that the issue Male should be sent back, but the female remain with themselves: so that the dominion of the Females was in the Mother. If there be no Contract, the Dominion is in the Mother [. . .]. If the Mother be the Fathers subject, the Child, is in the Fathers power [. . .]" (original emphasis). Cf. B. de Spinoza, *Tract. Pol.* XI, De democratia: "Sed contra Amazonae, quas olim regnasse fama proditum est, viros in patrio solo morari non patiebantur, sed feminas tantummodo alebant, mares autem, quos pepererant, necabant." I am grateful to F. Akkerman for his illuminating comments on this passage.

The *Amazones geographicae* thus provided a relatively material form of the concept "difference". Particularly in the ethnographies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Other was situated in a geographical scheme in which, generally speaking, an increased distance from the centre implied an increased distance from the Western model. The Bible and the world of antiquity were regarded as a part of European cultural identity, despite their chronological distance from the present,[125] to such an extent that they were virtually immune to questions of difference.[126] The presentation of the *Amazones juridicae* in the eighteenth century shows how the question of difference was expressed in the abstract logic of law. Although supported by the *Amazones geographicae*, the *Amazones juridicae* represented the dreaded or utopian alternative to the European legal system, thereby displaying a closer connection with European culture than the Amazons in distant regions seemed to have.[127]

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[124] It should be recalled that the ethographic construction of the Other, in which the Amazons occupied such a prominent place, had both a negative (barbarian, disturbing) and a positive (utopian, prediluvian) aspect. The strong ambivalence of the utterly Other as utopian and terrifying has been well brought out in an analysis of the ancient Kronia festival by H.S. Versnel, "Greek Myth and Ritual: The Case of Kronos", in J. Bremmer, ed., *Interpretations of Greek Mythology*, London 1987, pp. 121–152 (and at greater length in his *Inconsistencies*, Vol. II, pp. 89–135). Moreover, because the Amazons are women, and thus a traditional symbol of male sexual desire, they embody the characteristics of sexual fantasy from the first, with all the attractive and disturbing associations which that implies.

The historicizing of the worldview in the course of the eighteenth century entailed the formation of the notion of the Other in terms of temporal difference. G. Stocking has described this profound process as a displacement of the primary axis of cultural comparison by ninety degrees.[128] Historicism gained ground in the course of the nineteenth century, and with it the peculiar character of foreign cultures was taken to indicate not only geographical distance, with the corresponding differences in customs, but also a prior developmental stage—the development of civilization frozen at an earlier period of its history. The historicizing view therefore did not put an end to the geographical discourses, but it incorporated them by adapting them to the historical framework.[129] However, this perspective was preceded by a reassessment of the traditional image of the Amazons. It is this reassessment that we can trace in the works of Creuzer and Müller. The historicizing of the worldview brought about a fundamental rupture in the theory of natural law, which had been constructed as a system outside history. This put the question of the relationship between the former *Amazones juridicae* and Western culture back on the scholarly agenda. Given the structure of West European law, only a female figure could symbolize this alternative—a marginal, sexual Other. This characteristic of the Amazons was retained in Creuzer's and Müller's interpretations, but they acquired a different significance under the influence of the new paradigm. The historical conception of cultural difference shifted the Amazons as an alternative from distant climes to deep time. The legal boundaries made way for the boundary dividing the past from history.

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[125] The chronological distance was not assumed to be very great. Until the discoveries of Charles Darwin and a few of his predecessors, it was generally assumed that the Old Testament date for the creation was a correct indication of the age of the world and of humanity. The largest timespan which men like Creuzer envisaged in contemplating the beginning of civilization was thus around 5,000 years.

[126] A debate like the "Querelle des Anciens et Modernes" referred to the difference between classical and contemporary civilization as one of a (more or less elevated) qualitative distinction bearing on the same values. On the sudden change into the historicizing paradigm and its effects on literary criticism, see M.M. Rubel, *Savage and Barbarian. Historical Attitudes in the Criticism of Homer and Ossian in Britain, 1760–1800*, Amsterdam/Oxford/New York, 1978 (Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences, Arts Monographs, New Series 96).

[127] This may help to explain why the Amazons could function as a symbol for women for a brief period during the French Revolution, although the participation of women in the political transformations was shortlived. The batallions of female soldiers mustered by Théroigne de Méricourt under the motto of Amazons in 1792 had both a military and a political significance. The same is true of the Légion d'Amazones nationales, a women's club with purely political objectives which was founded in 1790. For the connections between these legal, political and anti-patrilineal notions, see Scott, "French Feminists and the Rights of 'Man': Olympe de Gouges's Declarations".

[128] Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, Ch. I. "Although later eighteenth-century progressivists often acknowledged a great debt to Montesquieu, between him and them the primary axis of cultural comparison had been displaced by ninety degrees, from the horizontal (or spatial) to the vertical (or temporal)." p. 14.

This is the background against which we should assess the views of Creuzer and Müller. Creuzer's *Symbolik* concentrated on the mythical core and the past; historical awareness is primarily displayed in the difference between present and past, which are related to one another to such an extent that they have both become detached from the ideal, symbolic culture. This stratum precedes history and the present, which are both characterised by materiality and variety. Creuzer regarded masculinity and femininity, which each had a place of their own in the symbolic culture, as essences or essential ideas, whether isolated in self-contained perfection, or in combination (androgyny).

Creuzer's view of masculinity and femininity is typical of the era of High Romanticism. Other writers of the period display the same predilection for individuality and expression which include both masculinity and femininity, instead of subjecting them to regulations which oblige the sexes to adopt one-sided, artificial limitations.[130] In elevating emotional and spiritual freedom above the confines of everyday life, they strove for unity and equality of the sexes. Sexuality was also a part of this chain of ideas. Although most of the Romantics sealed their love with a formal marriage, the expression of affection and sexual desire demanded uncompromising liberty. This ideal was above all a matter of cultural philosophy, far removed from political principles. In fact, within this perspective the public domain was completely alien and hostile to culture.[131]

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[129] For the incorporation and reinterpretation of the *Amazones geographicae* in terms of this framework in the second half of the nineteenth century, see below, p. 83ff.

[130] In a study of Romanticism which is still extremely valuable, Ricarda

Creuzer draws on this intellectual background for his view of natural symbolic culture. The significant past, inextricably tied as it is to public life, is insignificant in comparison with the potential of the human spirit,[132] which could express itself in genuine freedom in the past. It is in this submerged culture, where gender roles could be reversed in the solar and lunar religion and all opposites merged in the experience of nature, that the Amazons belong. They appear there as a ritually chaste group of warlike virgins. Creuzer's Amazons are an exponent of the notion of sexual freedom, not in the sense of promiscuity

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Huch describes the generation of approx. 1790–1820 as those who embraced this ideal and followed it in their own lives. The generation of around 1840 which set the tone of the era was to reject this ideal, sharply distinguishing masculinity and femininity and encouraging each of the separate sexes to develop on its own within an overaching vision of complementarity. R. Huch, *Die Romantik. Blütezeit, Ausbreitung und Verfall*, Tübingen, 1951^2, pp. 188ff.; 433ff. There are striking correspondences between Creuzer's ideas and those of the early Fr. Schlegel, but I have not been able to determine whether they were in contact with one another or not.

[131] For this Romantic notion of sex as a terrain beyond politics, see U. Vogel, "Rationalism and Romanticism: Two Strategies of Women's Liberation", in J. Evans et al., eds., *Feminism and Political Theory*, London etc. 1986, pp. 17–46.

[132] Creuzer's work on the *Symbolik* was possibly the reason why he broke off his publication of the Greek historical fragments in 1806. Various scholars, including A.D. Momigliano, "Friedrich Creuzer and Greek historiography", *Studies in Historiography*, pp. 75–90, attribute his interest in mythology, and especially his approach to it, to his relationship with Karoline von Günderode (1780–1806). Momigliano gives the impression of feeling little affinity with Creuzer as the author of the *Symbolik* or with Günderode, because it was these "problems" (p. 85) which put an end to Creuzer's historiographical work, which Momigliano considers to have been underrated. For the views of another famous ancient historian, see E. Rohde, *Friedrich Creuzer und Karoline von Günderode. Briefe und Dichtungen*, Heidelberg 1896. In his letters to Karoline, Creuzer often refers to his conception of the unchanging soul which contains the Idea, and the poetry and symbols which arise from it—images which clearly recur in the *Symbolik*.

and illegitimate procreation, but because the culture to which they belonged treated sexuality as an essential, unifying element. Creuzer's interpretation entails a revision of the juridico-political element which had been so important in the eighteenth-century picture by means of the term [hierodoule]. Religion, the experience of nature and sexuality replaced non-patrilineal law.

Müller was in agreement with Creuzer on a single point: the appreciation of the extraordinary imaginative capacity of the human mind in the creation of myths. However, Müller's position on mythology was really an agnostic one. While recognizing the fundamental importance of the mythopoetic faculty, he backed away when it came to actually describing the nature of this faculty or of assigning the heyday of mythopoesis a chronological position in the history of the human spirit. In my terminology, Müller deliberately restricted his attention to history; he was unable to make any statements on the past, i.e. the mythical core. The only exception is the migratory periods, because past and history, mythical core and mythical narrative, are present in them simultaneously. That is why they were so suitable for the analysis of myths. What Müller could describe, however, and what he did describe *in extenso*, is how the mythopoetic faculty subsequently expresses itself. Matters of secondary importance in Creuzer's opinion—geography, the national language, history, in short the entirety of (national) cultural history—thus became matters of primary importance for Müller. All the same, he was still forced to exclude all kinds of factors. For instance, he regarded the Dorians as more Greek than the rest of the Greeks;[133] and he had to distinguish the mythopoetic period, i.e. the past, from actual Greek history at the same time as relating it in some way or other to history. The passages on the historical and yet not historical character of myth cannot be called coherent or consistent.[134] To escape from this paradox, he had to keep emphasizing the many-sided and shifting character of myth as a document of cultural history.

Müller placed the Amazons outside this history of culture. They are not myth, but reality, and the historical change which Müller regarded as being so important for myths did not affect the Amazons. Müller is therefore able to retain the symbolic properties of the Amazons: they belong to what is remote in time and place, and they embody sexual freedom. These characteristics of the Amazons are borrowed from Creuzer to some extent, as we have seen, but Müller's evaluation of the new Amazons was negative. He had no sympathy with Görres' and Creuzer's attempts to situate the source of the main elements of Greek religion and mythology in the East.[135] The sexual liberty of the Amazons is now sexual licence: they are little more than prostitutes,[136] even though in a ritual context. From the successive development of Müller's image of the Amazons in *Orchomenos* and *Die Dorier*, it may be concluded that his final characterization of the Amazons as a phenomenon outside the purview of cultural history is the result of this sexual metamorphosis. The "recognition" of the sexual aspect of the Amazons in Creuzer's second edition of the *Symbolik*, combined with the heritage of the eighteenth century, turned Müller's Amazons into sexually promiscuous women in the service of a repulsive cult. The Amazons were not Greeks, and they therefore belonged to a setting (the Orient) which is "physical" and not "historical".[137] They are not a part of the history of culture; and they are therefore not mythical.

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[133] See the quotation above, p. 48.

[134] See e.g. *Prolegomena*, pp. 63–64 and 121ff.

The revision of the previous geographical and legal notion of the Amazons at the beginning of the nineteenth century created an image of the Amazons as figures from a distant past. The Amazons were believed to have lived in this period, but it was impossible for a historian to reconstruct it. They did not belong to the significant past, history, because they possessed characteristics which set them outside the current boundaries of history. Nor were the Amazons regarded as a regular exponent of mythology; in their case it was assumed that there was no difference between the stories and the underlying mythical core. The Amazons coincided with what the myths said about them. In this way, the Amazons were relegated to a world of their own. Neither historiographers nor students of myth could make forthright statements about them based on professional principles. The Amazons were an anomaly, just as they had been before.

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[135] See Schwab, *La Renaissance Orientale*, pp. 125ff.

[136] Cf. the etymologies of Amazon as virgin (Creuzer) or whore (Müller) cited in Pougens, *Trésor*.

[137] See the citation above, p. 49.

Had the intellectual change resulting from the influence of the new historicizing paradigm not altered this anomalous character? In a sense it had, for we have seen how the margins of culture, and thus the domain of the Amazons as well, were revised as geographical remoteness was replaced by temporal distance. In other respects, however, things remained the same. It may be helpful to approach the relation between the changing and the unchanging aspects of the image of the Amazons in terms of D. Sperber's notion of a "symbolic mechanism".[138] Sperber argues that if the meaning of a concept is changed under the force of circumstances, a reinterpretation takes place which rearranges the available knowledge. Symbols, however, are concepts which can be pictured as set between inverted commas; they contain aspects of encyclopaedic (i.e. what is regarded as factual) knowledge, but they occupy a position of their own vis-à-vis the system of knowledge. The necessary revision thus alters aspects of the symbol, but not its special position. Vice versa, the symbol exerts an influence on the encyclopaedic knowledge, because it continues to set a part of that knowledge between inverted commas.[139]

This very concise picture of the symbolic mechanism appears appropriate to the fate of the Amazons. The encyclopaedic knowledge with which the image of the Amazons was constructed underwent a process of change, but the anomalous position of the Amazons vis-à-vis culture as a whole remained the same. This conclusion in turn confirms the symbolic value of the Amazons as a people.

To turn again to the reactions of Creuzer and Müller from this perspective, we can see how the new, historicizing paradigm could lead in theory to a complete rearrangement of the categories. Creuzer's work can be regarded as an attempt to achieve precisely this (giving the word "Symbolik" in the title an ironic twist). His work was an attempt to interchange the non-significant past and history. It was no longer the fragmented, material history of the public sphere, devoid of women as it was, which mattered, but the spiritual, sensuous past in which masculinity and femininity were recognized as essential aspects. In his work the Amazons do not occupy a special position vis-à-vis other figures known from mythology. It was this original, extraordinary position of the Amazons which Müller restored in *Die Dorier.* Müller's reaction to Creuzer thus demonstrates how he delimited the field of cultural history. A group of ungoverned women, the embodiment of unfettered sexuality, is excluded from culture and thus from history.

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[138] D. Sperber, *Rethinking Symbolism*, Cambridge 1975 (orig. Paris 1974).

[139] Sperber, *Rethinking Symbolism*, pp. 141–142. The term "symbolic mechanism" will come in useful again when we turn to an analysis of the archaic Greek Amazon motif.

Müller's interpretation of the Amazons laid down the basic pattern for the future. As long as historicism determined the debate on mythology, the Amazons would be regarded as figures whose existence had to be sought outside the field of the cultural history of Greece. This view also made the Amazons unchanging, a quality which coincided with the definition of the mythical core and of the past. It thus becomes clear why the modern study of mythology repeatedly tries to reduce the various Greek stories about the Amazons to a single, original version. The tendency of ancient scholars to combine the corpus of traditional data in a single narrative justified the quest on the part of modern scholars in search of the original core of the Amazons.

Historical interpretations: Klügmann

The study of mythology developed in various directions in the decennia following the generation of Creuzer and Müller. New speculative schemes were devised in line with the Enlightenment versions of the *Stufentheorie* with a much more explicit historicizing character. They were intended to describe the evolution from primitive society, whether regarded as an absolute patriarchy or as a state of promiscuity or matriarchy, to the patriarchal family of the West.[140] These publications drew on the non-historical aspect of the myths for an unorthodox view of the entirety of cultural history, in which West European legal history, mythology and ethnology were combined in new ways. The Amazons, who now appeared as the representatives of a historically conceived cultural stratum, fulfilled an important role as an ethnographic and juridical argument in all of these approaches. As far as the study of (ancient) mythology proper is concerned, the natural symbol school of Max Müller, which also had a clearly comparative basis, came to dominate the stage from the middle of the century. K.O. Müller's influence on the study of myth was primarily in the idea that myths offer access to the hidden past of a people as a cultural unit. Written material still occupied pride of place in these mythological studies, while (comparative) etymology as a way of detecting the core of the myth even gained ground. The results of these philological approaches have already been discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

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[140] Apart from the works of Bachofen and Engels referred to above, the most well known are undoubtedly H.S. Maine, *Ancient Law: its Connection with the Early History of Society and its Relation to Modern Ideas,* 1861; J.F. McLennan, *Primitive Marriage. An Inquiry into the Origin of the Form of Capture in Marriage Ceremonies,* 1865; J. Lubbock, *The Origin of Civilisation,* 1870; and L.H. Morgan, *Ancient Society,* 1877. See Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*; Wesel, *Der Mythos*; S. Pembroke, "The Early Human Family: Some Views 1770–1870", in R. Bolgar, ed. *Classical Influences in Western Thought AD 1650–1870,* Cambridge 1977, pp. 275–291; and S. Sevenhuysen, *De orde van het vaderschap. Politieke debatten over*

Adolf Klügmann explicitly distanced himself from these views in the 1870s. Perhaps it was Klügmann's familiarity with the visual material—he worked in the German Archaeological Institute in Rome—that led him to see the importance of the eponymous Amazons, which can be found, for instance, in the coins minted by the Greek cities of Asia Minor. These traditions, which traced the foundation or naming of a city to an Amazon, are also attested by numerous written sources, but nevertheless the phenomenon of eponymy had received only scant attention. Klügmann's first publication on the Amazons, a long article in *Philologus* (1870),[141] is devoted to this eponymy. The very decision to begin his research with the Amazon tradition of Asia Minor was in accordance with the approach of his illustrious predecessors. A few years later he completed a monograph, *Die Amazonen in der attischen Literatur und Kunst. Eine archäologische Abhandlung* (1875). It is especially this more voluminous study which reveals Klügmann's position on the interpretation of myth, and in particular the Amazon myth.

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ongehuwd moederschap, afstamming en huwelijk in Nederland 1870–1900, Amsterdam 1987 on the importance of these theories for the debate on the law of inheritance and the function of the European family.

[141] O. Klügmann, "Ueber die Amazonen in den Sagen der kleinasiatischen Städte", *Philologus* 30, 1870, pp. 524–556. On the evidence of his monograph, the author's name was Adolf Klügmann.

The introduction contained an implicit repudiation of the influential school of natural symbolism, as well as K.O. Müller's interpretation:

> Recent mythological research has frequently compared the Amazons with the Valkyries or with the wild celestial horde, or thought to discern in their sagas vestiges of the worship of a warlike female deity revered by the Semitic peoples of Asia. Despite my efforts I have not succeeded in forming an independent judgement as to which of the analogies from Nordic or Asiatic ideas of the divine possess value for a more comprehensive understanding of the mythological nature of the Amazons. A firm point of view on these mythological observations therefore could not be incorporated in these writings.[142]

Klügmann's own version of the Amazon tradition is summed up in the term "saga". This choice of a term which had not been systematically[143] used before also leads the reader to expect a different treatment of the source material. This expectation is rewarded, for in both publications Klügmann arranges the testimonia in chronological order as far as possible, introducing a distinction between main versions and variants which he attributes to the ancient writers themselves. This aspect of his work—the comprehensiveness of the literary sources and the precision with which they are arranged—has never been equalled since. This approach enabled Klügmann to break with the idea that myth led some kind of underground existence and that the chronology of the myth was different from the chronology of history. Moreover, he regarded the tenor of the Amazon myth as consisting of the same fabric as all other history.

Klügmann's consistent use of the term "saga" to characterize the stories about the Amazons is indicative of a carefully studied choice. The contexts in which the Amazons appear, such as the Labours of Herakles or the adventures of Theseus, are also deliberately referred to by the same term. In the vocabulary of research on traditional narratives, the term "saga" indicates that the story in question reflects history in some way or other. For instance, the story may be basd on a historical phenomenon, such as the annexation of Iceland in the Icelandic sagas. The specific stories about the unusual adventures of famous families are also to be regarded as sagas. This can be illustrated by a glance at the way in which Klügmann prepares the presentation of his material:

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[142] Klügmann, *Die Amazonen*, pp. v–vi.

[143] The term "saga" is also to be found in W. Stricker, *Die Amazonen in Sage und Geschichte*, Berlin 1868, where it means "story" in the wide sense of the word (mythical or literary) and refers to the ancient Amazons, while "Geschichte" is concerned with women who acquired a reputation in history for their martial activities. Krause, *Die Amazonensage, kritisch untersucht und gedeutet*, used "saga" to refer to the whole myth in the Müllerian sense, including its origin in the past.

> The Iliad does not recognise the existence, anywhere in Asia, of scarcely any combats of mythical prehistory other than those against the warrior women [. . .]. The warlike reputation of outlandish women and their close connection with the cult of a deity are the main impetus of all sagas concerning Amazons amongst the Greeks. Both come together in the belief which would have them daughters and worshippers of Ares [. . .] in the national Hellenic saga, in literature and art the warlike nature of the outlandish women has been celebrated ever since.[144]
>
> The Attic is by far the most important of all Amazon sagas, not only for the richness of its tradition, but also because in it the element of cult stands in direct relationship to the character of the Amazon [. . .]. Disregarding this impetus of the saga for a moment, and considering it only in its generally recognized traits, it runs as follows: Theseus abducts an Amazon from her home and takes her off to Athens; the others, however, hurry after him, fight him and his men in Athens and are conquered [. . .]. The warrior heroines had already long been famous for their fight against the greatest national heroes before the Attic saga found its fixed form [. . .].[145]

This arrangement of the material and Klügmann's use of the term "saga" may be taken as an indication that he used the historical argument in the explanation of myth in a new way. He appears in the first instance to use the term "saga" to refer to the consistent whole resulting from meticulous textual criticism of the source material. This construction of a tradition, which is in conformity with the main contours of the familiar cultural history, might be called mythography. However, once we step outside this world, where the speculative core is supposed to be found, Klügmann uses the term "myth". That is why he uses the term "myth" in the first citation to introduce the speculative interpretation of the Amazons as Valkyries, and subsequently more generally to set the speculative interpretations of the Amazons ("a more comprehensive understanding of the mythological nature of the Amazons"; "mythological observations" outside the realm of science). Klügmann's approach can be understood as the principled rejection of an ahistorical mythical core. Etymology therefore plays virtually no role in his work.

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[144] Klügmann, *Die Amazonen*, p. 2.

[145] Idem, p. 3.

Klügmann's historical construction of the tradition follows a new criterion of "veracity" or "reliability". This criterion bears in the first instance no relation to the content of the story (does the myth of the Amazons refer to women who really existed?), but to the preconditions for scientific statements on the story. Klügmann's search for a criterion of this kind in the source material shows how much his research owed to positivism, which had come to dominate the academic institutions by now. This judgement then proves to serve as the basis for his interpretation of the story as well. Klügmann connects two categories without drawing any attention to what he is doing. "Myth" refers to what cannot be known scientifically (in my terminology: the past), while "saga" refers to a tradition which can be constructed in a justifiable manner (in my terminology: history). However, "myth" refers to a diffuse world of the imagination, which was just as elusive and incomprehensible *to the Greeks themselves*, while "saga" introduces a stage of the tradition which provided the Greeks with a sense of belonging and a cultural heritage. He is thus not concerned with what the Amazons actually were—Klügmann is not prepared to make any statements on that point—but with the capacity of the story of the Amazons to appear truthful in the eyes of the Greeks. Klügmann refers to this sense of truth-in-tradition by the term "national". In this sense, saga leaves myth far behind. It is the expression of a national consciousness. Klügmann therefore connects the most important moments in the tradition and the variants which he finds among the authors of antiquity with what he regards as the essence of history: nationalism as a precondition of the formation of national states. The Greek heroes function in this context as great political leaders, whose activities unite the people into a whole. This is why Klügmann regards the ahistorical core as an irrelevant phenomenon, and one which only brings about chaos in academic circles.

The article on the eponymous Amazon stories seems to be based on the same premises. Among the scholars who noted this phenomenon, none before or after Klügmann devoted so much attention to it. His conclusion is twofold: the eponymy of the Amazons arose as a national Aiolic theme, which provided the cities in this region with a sense of community and a politically functional status vis-à-vis the world outside; and the diffusion of eponymous attributions to Amazons in the Hellenistic age was encouraged by the direct involvement of the Makedonian queens in the founding and naming of cities.[146] Here too we see that Klügmann eliminates the mythical prehistory ("mythische Vorzeit") from his analysis and adapts the material to suit the chronological arrangement of the tradition. The only explanatory framework is that of the national saga, as indicated above. The questions of why the Amazons were chosen as eponyms and of the conditions under which this national tradition began are left aside.

While Klügmann realized more than anyone else how difficult it is to reconcile the eponymous and the heroic traditions, he confined the significance of this distinction to the level of the stories themselves. Their core is formed by "the martial character of the foreign women", not by any factor extraneous to this national saga.

> Meanwhile, there does not seem to be any justification in our opinion for the hypothesis that Hippolyte or Antiope, as the woman abducted by Thermodon is known in Athens, has ever had any other mythological significance than that of an Amazon.[147]

Since the stories of combat were intended to result in a sense of national superiority, the Attic saga is the most mature version.[148]

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[146] Klügmann, "Ueber die Amazonen", p. 527.

[147] Klügmann, *Die Amazonen*, p. 3.

[148] P. Devambez, one of the few scholars since Klügmann to have devoted himself to the eponymous Amazon stories, implicitly adopts the same point of view, "Les Amazones et l'Orient", *RA* 1976, pp. 265–280. He attributes the origin of these eponymous stories to the influence which Attic black-figure vase painting with its many Amazonomachies must have had in Eastern Greece. Furthermore, he is well aware that the significance of these representations could not be fully identical to that of the Attic variants. His thesis is that the Eastern Greek Amazon stories represented these women as "génies de mort". This conclusion certainly has its attractive side, but it is hard to avoid the impression that Devambez has attempted to achieve a synthesis between the Attic Amazons (whom he had declared "*Urheber*") and the striking function of the Amazons in the eponymous stories. In other

Later variants of the story of the Amazon campaign to Athens, like those to be found in Ploutarchos and Pausanias, are called, surprisingly enough, legends ("Legende"):[149]

> [. . .] so much at least emerges from Pausanias' words: that the warlike nature of the Amazons has not remained forgotten in their legend.[150]

To sum up, let us see what limitations Klügmann has imposed on the Amazon myth. First, the tradition can be broken down into different types of representation: a category "myth", which is as elusive for modern scholars as it was for the Greeks themselves; a category "saga", which can be reconstructed by the process of historical philology and which shaped the national consciousness of the Greeks; and third—though less clear-cut than the first two categories—the category "legend", which is an echo of the saga. As we have seen, this classification fulfils various functions at the same time, in which the ideas of the Greeks and those of modern scholars prove to be the same. It is this manoeuvre which shows how keen Klügmann was to transform mythology into mythography, which was related as closely as possible to historiography. Furthermore, this classification also has a vaguely chronological character, in which we can detect the familiar pattern of a (murky) beginning, a climax, and a "Nachleben".

Despite the term "national saga", Klügmann cannot simply be regarded as a follower of K.O. Müller. Of course, he was familiar with the latter's work,[151] but he certainly did not share all his views. For instance, Müller believed it possible to reconstruct the mythical prehistory, in particular the period of migrations, from the later tradition, while Klügmann rejected this enterprise as overspeculative. Klügmann is only interested in the function of myth in history, while Müller considered that the mythical origin in the past had to be taken into account as well. As regards the myth of the Amazons, Klügmann came to a different

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words, in the last resort Devambez too is out to find a single explanation for the Amazons in both traditions.

[149] There is little reason to suppose that Klügmann adopted these shifts in terminology on stylistic grounds. There is no evidence in his publications for the assumption that he regarded a high-flown style or variety of presentation as important prerequisites of a scholarly work.

[150] Klügmann, *Die Amazonen*, p. 95.

[151] Klügmann, *Die Amazonen*, p. 13.

conclusion to Müller. He saw nothing in the space which Müller had allocated to the Amazons outside the Greek context, and thus refuted Müller's famous thesis that the Amazons were connected with the great goddesses of Asia.[152]

Klügmann's principled rejection of the ahistorical core was very influential on his interpretation. Liberated from this all-absorbing question, he was more able than his predecessors to recognize the pluriformity of the myths of the Amazons. He displays an interest in different literary and visual traditions and in the distinction between the eponymous and the heroic stories. He regards the martial nature of the Amazons as the basic datum, and has no interest in investigating its origin. The national sagas have developed around this foundation. The fact that this character of the Amazons had a less well-defined profile in the later legend than at the acme of the Attic saga is an inevitable corollary of his position, but the fact that Klügmann was not prepared on principle to make the speculative leap to the mythical core and to surrender to the past led him to ignore an important issue. Why are the Amazons women? Would it not have been better to stimulate Attic national consciousness with stories about male opponents, like the topoi in the Attic speeches on the struggle of the Athenians against the Thrakians and the Persians? And even if the femininity of the Amazons was a fixed datum in the intangible prehistory of the motif, what function did their gender play in the heyday of the saga?

We may conclude that Klügmann endeavoured to abandon the current views of his time on the nature of myth. Investigation in search of the mythical core, whether it was situated in a distant past, a distant country, a distant language or a distant people, was redundant and scientifically unacceptable in his eyes. Instead, he proposed a mythography without mythology, which would be identical to historiography. Myth appeared in the guise of saga, a document of a flourishing national consciousness. By identifying the significance of myth with the main concern of history, national politics, he ran up against a paradox without noticing it. History, understood as the development of national states, had no room for women, who were not seen to be a part of the political body. This was one of the reasons why speculations on the core of the myth as an element of the past had evicted the feminine nature of the Amazons from history. In his attempt to make myth congruent with history as saga, Klügmann inevitably lost sight of the main ingredient of the myth of the Amazons: the fact that these warriors were women.

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[152] Klügmann, *Die Amazonen*, p. 13. It is remarkable that Klügmann emphasizes the fact that the priestesses of the Goddess prostituted themselves and were thus not suitable to assume the role of martial virgins in the Greek imagination. Here he explicitly opposes K.O. Müller and the latter's Komana thesis; ibidem. Klügmann appears to have combined the views of Creuzer (chastity, Komana) with those of Müller (prostitution). On the attribution of Creuzer's Komana thesis to Müller see my earlier remarks; is this the source of the identical error of Roscher, who refers among others to Klügmann in his lemma "Amazonen"?

Ethnographic interpretations of the Amazon myth, ancient and modern

Greek Amazonologies

There are three main locations as a possible home of the Amazons in Greek tradition. First is the Trojan hinterland, based on the report in the *Iliad* that the Amazons had fought with the Phrygians.[153] The epic narrative of Bellerophontes' struggle against them in Lykia,[154] the eponymous stories in the cities of Asia Minor, and the frequent mention of Themiskyra as their home after the beginning of the fifth century B.C., implied an extension of their country of origin to almost the whole of Asia Minor. Second, Thrake and the country of the Skythians, stretching to South Russia and the surrounding regions, figured prominently as Amazon territory. Third, the Amazons are connected with Libya and the whole of North Africa. The latter location is relatively late, and should probably be regarded as the mirror inversion of the location in the North.[155] Thus in Greek tradition the Amazons are located in the three continents which, according to Herodotos, constituted the world, under the female names of Europa, Asia and Libya.[156] The present discussion is not concerned with the oldest versions of the stories, but with the reaction by Greek writers who commented on this tradition from the fifth century B.C. far into the Byzantine era.[157] Their attempts to fill in the details of the Amazon myth, to make it comprehensible and to analyse it critically will be referred to in the present study as Amazonology. The first example is formed by the etymologies considered at the beginning of this chapter. Its most elaborate forms are the explanations of the Amazons in relation to other non-Greek peoples. Many aspects of this ethnographic Amazonology recur in some way or other in the texts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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[153] *Il.* III, 186–189.

[154] *Il.* VI, 186.

[155] All of these traditions are interwoven in the highly imaginative story told by Dionysios Skythobrachion (second century B.C.), as recorded in Diodoros III, 52–55. On the location of the Amazons at the outermost margins of the Greek world, see J. Carlier-Detienne, "Voyage en Amazonie Grecque", *AAntHung* XXVII, 1979, pp. 381–405.

The mythical, heroic world to which the Amazons belonged opened directly on to the present. New stories, like those of the battle of Theseus and the Athenians against the Amazons, or those connected with the spread of their eponymous function among an increasing number of cities, were regularly assigned a place in mythical prehistory. Claims that Alexandros the Great had actually met the Amazons are also indicative of the urge to relate the Amazons to the contemporary situation. Beside the Amazon queen Thalestris, who was supposed to have approached Alexandros with the proposal to create an excellent progeny with her, the Amazon people as such was also believed to have made an appearance when they were presented as a contingent to Alexandros by a satrap. Arrianos, a later commentator from the second century A.D., followed his criticism of the reports of the latter incident with the following significant remarks:

> However, this is attested by neither Aristoboulos nor Ptolemaios nor any other reliable writer. I myself do not think that the race of Amazons survived at that time, nor even before Alexandros' time, otherwise Xenophon would have mentioned them, as he referred to Phasians, Kolchians and other foreign peoples whom the Greeks encountered, either after the departure from Trapezos, or before they reached Trapezos, where they would certainly have come across Amazons if they had still been in existence. Still, I do not consider it credible that this nation of women,

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[156] Hdt. IV, 45.

[157] Of course, Greek criticism was not confined to the myths alone, nor were comments on mythology confined to the Amazon motif. However, only those aspects of this intellectual development which touch on the Amazons will be discussed here.

> which is mentioned by so many eminent authorities, never existed. Herakles, after all, is reputed to have been sent against them and to have brought the girdle of their queen Hippolyte back to Greece; it is also reported that Theseus and the Athenians were the first to defeat these women in battle and repel them when they invaded Europe. Mikon too painted the battle between the Athenians and the Amazons, just as he painted that between the Greeks and the Persians. Furthermore, Herodotos often referred to these women, and all the Athenians who delivered eulogies of those who had fallen in battle made special mention of the Athenian action against the Amazons. But if Atropates really did show Alexandros any women on horseback, then I believe that these women whom he paraded were other foreign women, who had learned to ride a horse and who were dressed in the traditional Amazon manner.[158]

Arrianos' point of view clearly demonstrates the combination of tradition and critical judgement which is typical of the Amazonology. The old stories must possess a kernel of truth, however fanciful some of them may appear to be. He focuses on the disparity between the past and the present, and combines his vision of the past with reported phenomena from the verifiable historical period. Arrianos does so by eliminating obviously incorrect details: these specially trained women are certainly not Amazons.

It is much more common to find a positive argument which is lacking in historical awareness but is based on a comparison of the Amazons with non-Greek peoples. This ethnographic Amazonology is the most familiar one. It is an attempt to give the Amazons a tangible form by connecting them with various peoples among whom the Greeks detected unusual customs: a high level of female mobility; sexual or marital mores which apparently failed to assign men authority over women and children; and the practice of horseriding and bearing arms by women.[159] This Amazonology is dominated by an interest in a northern location for the Amazons. Since this location has also received the most attention in modern investigations, it is worth examining some representative Greek interpretations.

Stephanos of Byzantium, who cites the following passage from the fourth-century B.C. writer Ephoros in his *Ethnika*, provides an example of this line of thought:

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[158] Arr. *An.* VII, 13, 3–6.

[159] These customs are not always related to Amazons as such. See for example the fragment of Skylax in note 162.

> Amazones, a nation of women near the Thermodon, according to Ephoros, who are now known as the Sauromatides. It is said that they excel over men by nature and the reason is sought in the climate of that region, because it is supposed to be very suitable for producing female bodies which are stronger and larger than male ones. I regard the common constitution of all people as a natural fact, and thus take this reason to be incorrect. The reason provided by the neighbouring peoples is more plausible. When long ago the Sauromatians went to Europe and all died there, the women left behind on their own +...+. When the young men had grown up they rebelled against the women; but the women won and the young men fled to a wooded spot and died. Out of fear that the new male generation would take revenge, the women instituted the rule of crushing their limbs and laming every male.[160]

Ephoros' account betrays the influence of two passages from Herodotos' description of the Skythians. Herodotos emphatically placed both stories in the context of the nomadic existence which characterized the Skythians.[161] At the beginning of Book IV, he states that the Skythians had occupied the northern part of Asia Minor for twenty-eight years after expelling the Kimmerians. When they returned to their native country, the men discovered that their womenfolk had grown tired of being left on their own and had formed relationships with their slaves—who had been blinded by their masters. The male children born of these unions, who had by now become adults, resisted the return of the Skythian men. The latter decided not to fight against this slave army, but to advance on them whip in hand. When they saw this, the would-be soldiers recalled that they were slaves by nature and fled.[162] This story contains the same ingredients as the one narrated by Ephoros: the prolonged absence of men on a military expedition; women who take matters into their own hands; and a summary plot which reveals that would-be soldiers (who are unfree or lacking in masculinity) are only able to assume their position by a denial of their real nature.[163]

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[160] Steph. Byz. s.v. Amazones: *FGrHist* 70, F 52, 60, 114, 160.

[161] Hdt. IV, 2; 19ff; 116. For the Greek view of the nomadism of the Skythians see F. Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote. Essai sur la représentation de l'autre*, Paris 1980; and Shaw, "Eaters of Flesh". A different modern interpretation took up the theme of the Kimmerians and identified them with the Amazons, E. Rohde, "Studien zur Chronologie der Griechischen Literaturgeschichte", *RhM* 36, 1881, pp. 380–434 and 524–575, and R. Ghirshman, "Les Cimmériens et leurs Amazones", in *Proc. of the VII Congress of the International Federation of the Societies of Classical Studies*, Vol. I, J. Harmatta, (ed.) Budapest 1984, pp. 47–52.

[162] Hdt. IV, 1–4. S. Pembroke, "Women in Charge: The Function of Alter-

Ephoros refers not to Skythians but to Sauromatides, who belong to the Skythians and about whom Herodotos tells a different story.[164] When the Amazons living near Themiskyra were taken on board a ship by the Greeks, they overwhelmed their abductors. Since they were ignorant of the art of sailing, they drifted in the Black Sea until they landed on the Skythian coast, where they resumed their life of plundering and fighting. The Skythians came to blows with the Amazons and, when the fighting was over, they discovered to their astonishment, after stripping their opponents of their armour, that they were women. They immediately changed their tactics. They sent young men to the Amazon camp to make contact with the Amazons, and the latter proved to be by no means averse to sexual intercourse with the Skythians. However, the Amazons objected to a permanent union with the young Skythians because their own way of life was so different from that of the Skythian women; the latter were confined to domesticity, enclosed in the waggons in which the nomadic Skythians lived. The young Skythians were now obliged to opt for a life on the Amazons' terms, as well as moving with them to a different spot, on the other side of the Tanaïs, in order to sever the links with their own people and to prevent conflict. That is what happened. This new nation, called the Sauromatians, has a somewhat different language from the rest

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natives in Early Greek Tradition and the Ancient Idea of Matriarchy", *JWI* 30, 1967, pp. 1–35 refers on p. 34 to a story in which the word [gunaikokratia], "rule by women", makes its first appearance; this story too contains the same elements: "Behind the Istri is a people called the Libyrni [. . .]. Here women are in charge, and the women are married to free men, but they have sexual intercourse with slaves and men from neighbouring tribes" (Skylax 21 = *GGM* 1, p. 27 Müller). The region in question is not South Russia but Illyria (modern Albania). For an Illyrian etymology for the word [Amazones] see G. Bonfante, "Il nome delle Amazzoni".

[163] For an analysis of the parallelism between rule by women and rule by slaves, see P. Vidal-Naquet, "Esclavage et gynécocratie dans la tradition, le mythe, l'utopie" in *Le chasseur noir. Formes de pensée et formes de société dans le monde grec*, Paris 1981, pp. 267–288 (the original article dates from 1970).

[164] Hdt. IV, 110–117.

of the Skythians, because the Amazons were probably quicker to pick up Skythian than the Skythians were to acquire Amazonian, but they still retained elements of their own language. The Sauromatian women join in the hunt and war, like their Amazon ancestors, and a woman may not marry until she has killed an enemy. The unsuccessful ones remain spinsters.

Only a few of the many themes contained in this narrative can be discussed here. The idea that language conveys identity is already familiar, but the function of the Amazons is surprising. The Amazons make their entry at the beginning of the story; they enter into alliances with the Skythian men and eventually disappear as Amazons. Only their way of life has left its mark; in all other respects the typically Amazonian character of an exclusively female nation has vanished. It is a reverse Amazonology: the Sauromatians, particularly the women, do not explain who the Amazons are, but the Amazons explain who the Sauromatians are. This is a clear indication that we are dealing with a Greek story in which the traditional Amazons appear as an explanation [aition] for what the Greeks perceive. The story as such reverses the argument at the narrative level: it begins with this [aition] and ends with the unusual situation which it is supposed to explain. However, there is yet another reversal. The northern location of the Amazons is attested a century earlier than the location in Themiskyra;[165] the latter is first mentioned in Aischylos' *Prometheus Vinctus*, which can be dated between 460 and 450 B.C. Perhaps the choice of Themiskyra is a compromise between this northern association and the traditional location in the Trojan hinterland.[166] The question is when and why the transfer to Themiskyra took place, and what light this throws on what people imagined the Amazons and the world around them to be like. At any rate, the movement of the Amazons in Herodotos' story, in which the Amazons are transferred from Themiskyra to Skythia, reverses the historical movement reflected in the tradition.

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[165] The Amazonology embodied in texts is not the first form in which the Greeks attempted to give the Amazons a more tangible form by connecting them with non-Greek peoples. Vase-paintings from the second half of the sixth century already include representations of Amazons with Skythian attributes. These data are evidence for an interest in the unusual features of non-Greek peoples and in reports on the areas in question in the early sixth century, even though this cannot be directly concluded from the literary sources for the period. For a fuller discussion see Chapter V.

[166] A location in Themiskyra was apparently a good home base for the Amazons when they fought against the Phrygians beside the Sangarios; the Amazons had to come from somewhere, and at first sight the Anatolian hinterland served that purpose. However, some writers had their doubts about the plausibility of this situation. Strabon sharply criticised his predecessors not only with regard to the motivation of the Amazons in coming to the

A special and unusual moment in Greek contact with the Northern Pontos is the journey of Aristeas of Prokonnesos, who travelled to the legendary Arimaspoi soon after the middle of the seventh century. Reports on the wonderful character of the journey, the traveller and his destiny spread over a large part of the Greek-speaking world, probably supported by a report by the adventurous Aristeas himself, the *Arimaspeia.* The Amazons also featured in this travel account, which situated them in Skythian territory, rich in iron, near Lake Maiotis. This is the deduction drawn by J.D.P. Bolton from a passage in Aischylos' *Prometheus Vinctus* in which Prometheus explains Io's route to her:

> You will come to the river Hybristes, which does not belie its name: this do not cross—for its crossing is not easy—until you reach the Caucasus—none other—, loftiest of ranges, where the river spouts forth its might from the very brows of the mountain. In traversing those peaks which neighbour the stars you must bend your path southwards, when you will come to the host of man-hating Amazons, who one day will settle at Themiskyra by the Thermodon, where the stepmother of ships, Salmydessus, arms the sea with jagged fangs and gives evil entertainment to sailors. These Amazons will guide you on your way, and gladly, to where, right by the narrow gateway of the saltmere (the Palus Maeotis), is the Cimmerian isthmus. This you must be bold to leave, and cross the Maeotian channel; far flung and everlasting will be the fame of your crossing, and from it men will call the strait *Oxford* [*Bosporos*]. Now, having left the plains of Europe, you will enter the Asian continent.[167]

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assistance of their former enemy (see too Chapter IV below), but also regarding the possibilities of geographical and cultural contact between Themiskyra and Troy (XII, 3, 21–24).

[167] Aischylos *PV,* 718–728, in the witty translation by Bolton, *Aristeas,* pp. 49–50 (this passage is also discussed below, p. 179ff). Within the context of the tragedy, which inevitably imposed its own demands on the form, this passage may be an example of an "oral route", which perhaps formed part of the *Arimaspeia* and was eventually recorded in writing in various versions as *Periplous* and *Periegesis.*

On a number of grounds Bolton proposes a different sequence for the lines

This passage reveals that, in the second quarter of the fifth century, Aischylos believed that the Amazons lived in Themiskyra near the Thermodon, and that they had previously lived north of the Black Sea.[168] We can compare a passage from his near contemporary Hellanikos of Lesbos, as cited by Ploutarchos:

> This [sc. the abduction of Antiope by Theseus] was thus alleged as the cause of the war with the Amazons. This does not seem to have been any insignificant or typically female affair. For they could never have set up camp in the city nor fought at close quarters on the site near the Pnyx and the Mousaion if they had not first conquered the surrounding countryside in order to approach the city without fear. It is difficult to believe that they arrived after crossing the Kimmerian Bosporos when it was frozen, as Hellanikos asserts. But that they set up camp right next to the centre of the city is attested both by the names of certain sites and by the tombs of those who fell in battle.[169]

Once again the Kimmerian Bosporos crops up in a reference to the original location of the Amazons—or should we suppose that the Amazons went due east from Themiskyra round the Black Sea [perièlthon], traversed the northern shore of the Black from east to west, passed through Thrake, and then headed south for Attika? This is unlikely. The Amazon route is much easier to understand—i.e. it avoids a detour of thousands of miles in an inhospitable climate—if we assume that their home was much further north, so that there is no need to assume the eastern route past Kolchis. Taken together, these passages confirm the hypothesis that Themiskyra on the Thermodon, which

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after "this do not cross" (717) to make Io pass by the home of the North Wind, *Aristeas*, pp. 54ff. However, this does not affect my argument, except in emphasising the northern (rather than eastern) element in the setting of these dangerous travels. According to Bolton's reconstruction, Aristeas claimed that the way of life of the Issedones recalled that of the Amazons because of the equality between the sexes that he believed to exist there, *Aristeas*, p. 79. Since it is unlikely that Aristeas claimed that the Issedones, or rather the Issedonian women, were actually Amazons, however, the point is not important here, although these data on equality between the sexes in South Russian societies were to become a factor in the development of the ethnology.

[168] Bolton provides a meticulous argument for the undeniable fact that in Aischylos' *Prometheus Vinctus* the Amazons are taken to live north of the Black Sea, near the Chalybes who work in iron. He rightly sums up the problems of the passage under review (717–735) with the question: "Where is his Caucasus?" Bolton, *Aristeas*, p. 50.

[169] Plout. *Thes.* 27, 1–2; *FGrHist* 4 F167 a, b.

is generally regarded as the home of the Amazons, did not originally have this function. The idea that the Amazons lived to the north of the Black Sea would appear to have preceded the choice of Themiskyra and to have continued to survive as a rival location.

Around the beginning of the first century A.D., Strabon elaborates on the interpretation of the Amazons as a people of the north with the following account:

> Metrodoros of Skepsis, Hypsikrates and others who are familiar with the region state that they are neighbours of the Gargarians and live at the foot of that part of the Kaukasos which is called the Keraunian Mountains. They spend most of the time by themselves, occupied with ploughing, sowing, tending herds, and especially with horses, while the most valiant among them engage in hunting and warfare. They all have the right breast cauterized at a tender age so that they can easily use the right arm for all purposes, and especially for spear-throwing. They also use the bow, sagaris [Scythian axe] and pelta [light shield], and from the hides of wild animals they fashion helmets, clothing and girdles. For two months of the year, however, they go up into the nearby mountain which separates them from the Gargarians. The latter also go up, in accordance with some ancient custom, to celebrate a sacrifice with them and to unite with them, inconspicuously and under cover of darkness, without fixed partners, in order to beget children. After impregnating them, they send them away. The Amazons keep all female children that are born, but they send male children away to be reared by the Gargarians. The Gargarians adopt them individually, treating them as their sons from ignorance [sc. of their real paternity].
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> The Mermodas cascades down from the mountains through the land of the Amazons and through Sirakene and the wilderness in between, and then flows into the Maiotis. It is said that the Gargarians came with the Amazons to this region from Themiskyra, but that they revolted and made war on them in alliance with some Thrakians and Euboians who had arrived there in the course of their wanderings. Later, they ceased hostilities and came to an agreement on the terms already mentioned, viz. that they would only meet to beget children, and that they would otherwise live apart.[170]

Once again the location of the Amazons attracts attention. This time the Amazons and their reserve men, the Gargarians, inhabit the hilly country near Lake Maiotis, where they have arrived from Themiskyra. The route they follow is the same as that in the beginning of Herodotos' Sauromatian story, viz. the Amazons travel from Themiskyra to the coast of South Russia.[171] But once again reversal has taken place in the relation of the Amazons with men and in the propagation arrangements. The Amazons had subordinated the Gargarians to themselves from the start (slavery motif), but after the Gargarian revolt the two peoples live separately side by side. In the Herodotean story, the Skythians and Amazons were merged to become the Sauromatians; here an original unity is divided to form two sexes and two peoples.

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[170] Strab., XI, v, 1–2. The idea that the Amazons do not practise agriculture is absent from the beginning of the account.

This selection of arguments forms a part of the scholarly ethnography which is an important ingredient of the Amazonology. From various texts, such as the passages cited from Arrianos and Stephanos of Byzantium, it is evident that this commentary is the result of reading someone else's work and of the possibility of comparing different reports and contrasting or combining the different versions to arrive at a new text. All of these data are yet another indication of the literary character of this Amazonology. Herodotos, one of the major ethnographic writers, however, represents a different method: generally speaking, his written account is a record of oral reports which he has put down in writing, as can be seen from the narrative character of these stories and from the fact that Herodotos juxtaposes them without any prior attempt to systematize them or to synthesize them in a single running narrative.[172]

The Amazonology is clear evidence for the need to connect the Amazons with non-Greek peoples. In this ethnographic discourse, the barbarians were used to throw light on the Amazons, or the Amazons were used to explain the barbarians. Although the distinction between Greeks and non-Greeks was initially defined in terms of language, from the fifth century on (and possibly somewhat earlier) the emphasis shifted to social or cultural comparison in terms of sexual and marital customs, living conditions, diet and geography. The Amazons continued to occupy a special position in this mental world, for the attempt to interweave them into the general ethnographic fabric was never a total success. The mythical origin of the Amazons, which manifested a character of its own in the various stories of confrontations with heroes, stood in the way of satisfactory integration in this more recent worldview. The etymologies proposed for [Amazones] clearly illustrate the ambiguity of a Greek term for a non-Greek way of life. It is precisely this gap between the mythical stories and the ethnological explanations which served time and again to motivate a new interpretation.

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[171] Hdt. IV, 110.

[172] Nevertheless, it has been argued by some scholars that a certain system can be detected in Herodotos' worldview, which structures his ethnography irrespective of the source from which he draws his information. See, for example, Hartog, *Le miroir*, Rosellini and Saïd, "Usages de femmes", and the other cases discussed below.

The Greek ethnological approach has persisted in modern research in two ways. It was particularly at the end of the last century that interpretations of the Amazon myth were advanced which were relatively close to the Greek method of explanation. In other words, modern scholars also tried to trace elements of the Amazons in the "realia" of non-Greeks. These reconstructions will be discussed below. In the last decennia, however, an entirely new approach has been put forward, which takes Greek ethnography itself as the object of inquiry. In this case, research focuses on the projective, autonomous character of the Greek construction of the Other, so that the Amazon elements are not explained as a reflection of "realia", but as elements which were utilized by the Greeks in constructing images of non-Greeks. The latter interpretations will be discussed in connection with structuralist approaches to the Amazon myth.

Modern ethnographic (re)constructions: Skythians or Hittites?

Modern research has concentrated on two of the three areas in which the Greeks situated the Amazons: Asia Minor and South Russia.[173] In view of the large number of proposals which have been made over the years to account for the origin of the

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[173] J.O. de G. Hanson, "The Myth of the Libyan Amazons", *MAf* III, 1974, pp. 38–43 is alone in regarding the Libyan version as the original one (I am grateful to Bianca Röhrig in Münster for bringing this article to my attention). Since both the chronological development of the different versions and the character of the relevant account in Diodoros contradict such an interpretation, I shall not go into it in any further detail.

Amazon myth, I shall confine my remarks to a representative selection. Leonhard's identification of the Amazons as Hittites, and Huxley's suggestion that they were connected with the Arzawans, have already been discussed in connection with the etymologies. Other advocates of a location in Asia Minor include Rohde and Ghirshman, who identified the Amazons with the Kimmerians. A location in South Russia, on the other hand, is argued for in the authoritative works by E.H. Minns[174] and M.I. Rostovzeff,[175] as well as in the more recent study by W.B. Tyrrell.[176] Since the Skythian interpretation[177] and the Hittite identification are undoubtedly the most familiar, I shall concentrate on them.

To begin with the Skythian interpretation, the supposition that the Greek stories about Amazons are based on a vague familiarity with Skythians is still a widely-held view.[178] Herodotos, the first to describe the Amazons and the Sauromatians, was writing about a region where he had travelled himself, and recounted alleged events whose consequences were still visible in his day. The fact that Herodotos' Sauromatian story is actually an inverted explanation has passed unnoticed so far. The explicit association between the two peoples and the idea of explaining the ethnological enigma (the Sauromatians) by means of annother enigma (the Amazons) were sufficient to regard him as the most important witness.

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[174] E.H. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks. A Survey of Ancient History and Archeology on the North Coast of the Euxine from the Danube to the Caucasus*, Cambridge 1913.

[175] M.I. Rostovzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in south Russia*, Oxford 1922. Rostovzeff continued the publication of his investigation with *Skythien und der Bosporos. Bnd. I. Kritische Uebersicht der schriftlichen und archäologischen Quellen*, Berlin 1931 (originally in Russian).

[176] W.B. Tyrrell, *Amazons. A Study in Athenian Mythmaking*, Baltimore 1984, discussed below.

[177] The term "Skythian interpretation" is used deliberately to avoid adopting a position in this controversial area. The people in question are usually referred to as the Sauromatians, but E.H. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, p. 39, calls them Sarmatians, whose relations with the Skythians and the Iranians are not entirely clear. It is obvious from his description of the Sarmatians, ibid. p. 84, that they are the same as M.I. Rostovzeff's Sauromatians. Rostovzeff, however, distinguishes between the Sauromatians and the Sarmatians, arguing that the latter, a patriarchal Iranian people, did not appear on the Don until about the fourth century, *Iranians and Greeks*, p. 33.

[178] The continuity of this view can be illustrated by D. Atkinson et al., eds., *Women in Russia*, London 1978, pp. 1–3, where the Amazons are referred to as a sign of Slav matriarchy; n. 3 refers to a publication of 1849, which derived the name [Amazones] from Slavonic "Omuzhony", "masculine women"; J.G. Cuno had filled almost two pages with etymologies to support the view that the Amazons were a typically Slav theme; see his *Forschungen im Gebiete der alten Völkerkunde I. Die Skythen*, Berlin 1871, pp. 280–287.

Rostovzeff comments on Herodotos' Sauromatian story as follows:

> Owing to the gynaecocracy which prevailed among the dwellers near the Sea of Azov, the semi-historical legend of the Amazons came to be localized on the shores of that sea. These female warriors, according to Herodotus, migrated to the steppes near the Sea of Azov [the Maiotis] after their defeat by the Greeks in their original home, Themiscyra, on the northern shore of the Euxine. Landing close to the Sea of Azov, they came to blows with the Scythians and ended by marrying the youth of Scythia and forming the semi-Scythian Sauromatian State. The legend is undoubtedly aetiological, but it bears witness to historical facts: to constant relations by sea between the straits of Kerch and the southern shore of the Euxine; to a fierce struggle between the Maeotian peoples and the Scythian conquerors, terminating not in a complete Scythian victory but in compromise and intermarriage [. . .].[179]

The historical dimension in Rostovzeff's account is relatively vague and superficial; this acculturation cannot be set in the distant past. Nor is the (small) degree of remoteness in time responsible for the mythopoesis itself: this is not a prehistoric datum which has been turned into a mythic story in the course of time, as K.O. Müller had argued. The content of the myth is taken to be the result of a comparison of life-styles, a confrontation between two cultures.

The discussion is taken up by Minns, who continues:

> Herodotus goes on to say that the Scyths were very much averse from adopting foreign customs, and quotes the lamentable ends of Anacharsis and Scyles [Skythians who were killed for going Greek]. But one might take this rather as evidence of the attraction the higher Greek civilization exercised over some of them. Incidentally we learn that the Scythian kings were polygamous, that a son succeeded to his father's wives, and that some had married Greek women.
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> We have already noticed that the chief difference between the Scyths and the Sarmatians was in the position of the women. Among the former they were apparently entirely subject to the men and were kept in the waggons to such an extent, that, as

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[179] Rostovzeff, *Iranians and Greeks*, p. 33.

> Hippocrates says, their health suffered from want of exercise. Whereas among the Sarmatians they took part in war, rode about freely and held a position which earned from some tribes the epithet of women-ruled, and gave rise to the legend of the Amazons. This is in some degree the natural position of women among nomads, they have to take charge of the Jurtas when the men are absent rounding up straying cattle, and are quite capable of looking after everything at home, entertaining a stranger and even beating off an attack by robbers. It does not argue primitive community of women or Tibetan polyandry, such as the Greeks attributed to the Scyths and Herodotus to the Massagetae. The queens who are so prominent in Greek stories about nomads, Tomyris, Zarinaea, Tirgatao, can hardly be quoted as historical proofs of women rule, though they might be parallelled in Tartar history.[180]

This is followed by an explanation of why the Skythians differed from other nomads in keeping their womenfolk in confinement.

Minns' argument contains a number of important elements. First of all, the reference to Tibetan polyandry is a clear allusion to the widespread theories on the process of human civilisation which were systematized and given an evolutionist character in the second half of the nineteenth century.[181] Second, Minns is very explicit on the significance of the Sauromatians for the Amazon myth: the way of life of the Sauromatian women, which contrasted with that of Greek women, lies behind the stories of the Amazons. Minns therefore uses the term "legend" because it has less of a speculative ring about it than the word "myth", and above all refers to the story in its historical guise.[182] Finally, Minns is careful to distinguish the significance of this life-style from the range of associations evoked by the independent activity of women, such as polyandry, matriarchy or promiscuity.[183]

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[180] Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, p. 84.

[181] For instance, McLennan, *Primitive Marriage*, regarded polyandry of the Tibetan type as a fundamental stage in the development of human history, while Lubbock, *The Origin of Civilisation*, viewed it as an exceptional phenomenon. See too Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, Chapters 1, 2 and 4.

[182] This terminology corresponds to that used by Klügmann; and compare the passage from Rostovzeff quoted below.

[183] The term "primitive community of women" refers to common ownership of property and to the right of all men to the bodies of all women. In fact, in referring to this absolute promiscuity, it would be equally admissible to speak of a "primitive community of men" from a feminine point of view. However, such a formulation is as rare as the adoption of such a point of

Rostovzeff's argument is slightly different:

> As far as I know, almost all students of the Amazonian legend, led astray by the semi-historic character of the story, have been induced to explain it by a historical misconception. The beardless Hittites—that is the latest explanation[184]—were taken for women and so gave rise to the legend. Others consider that the Cimmerians were, so to speak, the proto-Amazons. Nothing is less likely. Why not adopt a much simpler explanation? The Amazons are localized wherever there was a cult of the ancient Mother-Goddess; where that cult was connected, as it regularly was, with a social and political organization of matriarchal type; where women were not only mothers and nurses, but warriors and chieftains as well. The matriarchal stratum and the cult of the Mother Goddess are very ancient in Asia Minor. They are the mark of the pre-Semitic and pre-Indo-European population—the autochthonous population, if we care to use the word. Semites and Indo-Europeans brought with them the patriarchal society and the cult of the supreme God. This cult imposed itself on that of the Mother Goddess, but did not destroy it, least of all in Asia Minor. With the cult of the Goddess, the Amazons, her warrior priestesses, likewise survived.
>
> Not only the cult of the Mother Goddess, but also the matriarchal structure, persisted for a long time in certain places, especially on the shores of the Black Sea—in the immediate neighbourhood of the Greeks—among the Sindians, the Maeotians, the Sauromatians, and, in the Crimea, among the Taurians, who sacrificed travellers to their Parthenos, their Virgin Goddess. It is quite natural that the Greeks, who created the legend of the Amazons on their first contact with the matriarchal tribes of Asia Minor, should have made the Amazons of Asia Minor migrate to South Russia and the Caucasus, where matriarchy, the cult of the Mother Goddess, and the specific ritual of that cult remained in full vigour.[185]

In a certain sense, Rostovzeff's argument is the mirror inversion of that of Minns. The latter emphatically contests the notion that the Sauromatians really were matriarchal; like the Lykians, he claims, they were given the *epitheton disornans* of a [gunaikokratia][186]

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view. In this respect, Greek usage, which commonly refers indiscriminately to possessions, women and children as "property", represents an ideal type of this perception.

[184] Rostovzeff's remark is indicative of the popularity which the Hittite thesis had gained by this time.

[185] Rostovzeff, *Iranians and Greeks*, p. 34.

[186] On [gunaikokratia] see Pembroke, "Women in Charge", p. 20; cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1269b40; 1313b32.

because the Greeks were unable to interpret their life-style in any other way. Rostovzeff's argument is based on two principles, and is in fact lacking in consistency. On the one hand, he claims that the Amazon myth formed an interpretive framework that determined the description and interpretation of the [barbarika nomima]; but on the other hand, he does not abandon the idea that the myth must originally have arisen from the perception of matriarchal practices. He tries to solve the problem that he has himself created in two ways. First, he alters the function of the myth by changing it geographically, for while the matriarchal image of the Amazons in Asia Minor is supposed to have been derived from actual perception, it is projected onto practices in South Russia. Second, he is eager to assign the two geographical regions in question a common character to enable the myth to retain its persuasiveness despite the change of meaning. To this end, he falls back on the familiar construction of a submerged cultural stratum. He accepts the matriarchal hypothesis in its entirety, and his interpretation of the original Amazons as priestesses of a cult of the Goddess resembles the theories of Creuzer, K.O. Müller and Bachofen. However, by emphasising the possibility of reinterpretation, by which the motif acquired a new meaning through the Greek confrontation with contemporary cultures, he also adduces the theme of cultural comparison and diffusion of motifs as an argument.[187] Rostovzeff's awkward manoeuvres are probably due to the fact that he intended to demonstrate *something else* with his interpretation of the Amazon myth, viz. the existence of ancient socio-cultural links extending throughout the whole Black Sea area in the history of settlement near the Sea of Azov.[188]

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[187] In this respect too his theory resembles that of Müller, who had interpreted the Ethiopian association of the Amazons in this way, *Orchomenos* II, pp. 380ff.

[188] According to M.A. Wes (personal communication), Rostovzeff completed *Iranians and Greeks* in Russian in May 1918; the English edition, published in Oxford in 1922, is a revised version of this Russian edition (Petrograd 1918). During the period in which Rostovzeff was working on the Russian version, South Russia and the area around the Caucasus were occupied by enemy (mainly German) troops, and Turkey was an ally of the Central Powers. Rostovzeff's thesis that these regions were once linked by a common culture thus had a bearing on contemporary politics. On the influence of Russian social and political circumstances on Rostovzeff's work, see M.A. Wes, *Michael Rostovzeff, Historian in Exile. Russian Roots in an American Context*, Stuttgart 1990.

Despite the important differences between them, I have quoted extensively from E.H. Minns and M.I. Rostovzeff in order to illustrate the ethnological approach. They regard the origin of the Amazon myth as the result of a comparison between Greek and non-Greek ways of life, a confrontation which was resolved in the mental world of the Greeks through the creation of Amazons, women who live like men. The chronological aspect plays only a marginal role in these studies, and is certainly not held responsible for the change which has taken place between perception and narrative. This clearly illustrates the main difference between the ethnological and the historical approach. Klügmann had unravelled the interweaving of the Amazon motif with a deep stratum of the past, clearing the ground for Minns and Rostovzeff—the latter at any rate in the second part of his argument—to locate the matriarchal aspect which adhered to the Amazons in more or less the same period. Once again, the alterity of Amazon society was situated on a geographical axis.

We can therefore conclude that these modern ethnographic interpretations have reinstated the longstanding tradition of the *Amazones geographicae*. Minns explicitly turned his back on the evolutionist adaptation of this tradition, while Rostovzeff, at least formally, contested the idea of a submerged past. Both arguments indicate that the modern ethnological explanation is essentially a continuation of the Greek approach. In this respect, it is typical that neither of these two scholars paid attention to the narrative character of Herodotos' text. Instead, they read the relevant passages as if they represented an account which corresponded to a considerable extent to reality, and treated their narrative character as an incidental factor of minor importance. Neither of them tackles the general problem of how this core developed to become the specific, mythical story. In other words—to borrow Pembroke's[189] geological metaphor—, they simply regard the ethnographic data in the Greek texts as fossils instead of reading them as *descriptions of* fossils. It is only recently that the specific character of Greek ethnology has become an object of study in its own right, as we shall presently see.

We do find an elaborate discussion of the mythopoetic process in W.B. Tyrrell's interpretation of the Amazon myth. However, when it comes to the origin of the myth, Tyrrell unexpectedly deviates from his mainly structuralist principles, and accepts the Sauromatians as lying behind the myth.[190] Since he fails to comment on this remarkable mental somersault, I venture a tentative explanation. The respectable history of the Skythian interpretation may have tempted him to fall back on this argument. Moreover, his own interpretive framework leans in this direction, for Tyrrell regards the Amazon myth as the result of a large number of inversions of the norms of classical Athens, which were attributed to other cultures in their reverse form. Seen in these terms, the formation of the Amazons could be regarded as the creation of a society which would be the opposite to Athens in every way.[191] However, it is likely that Tyrrell was not prepared to go all the way in giving this creation of the Other a fully autonomous character, and was thus led to suggest that there were authentic Others to set this process in motion; in terms of the geological metaphor: without fossils there can be no descriptions of fossils. Nevertheless, this position cannot be reconciled with the development of the Amazon motif, since it is much older than any conceivable contact between Greeks and Skythians. Tyrrell's disregard of chronology is a major problem in his work as a whole, and it is closely connected with his decision to ignore the epic variants and to focus all attention on the Attic versions.

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[189] Pembroke, "Women in Charge", p. 8.

The Hittite interpretation can be dealt with more briefly. In the 1890s excavations in central Asia Minor revealed the remains of a hitherto unknown civilisation. When combined with the epic formulae in the *Iliad*[192] which described the Amazons as female warriors who came into conflict with Priamos and Bellerophontes somewhere in Asia Minor, these discoveries prompted the idea that the Hittite empire, which extended to the coast, was also the territory of the Amazons. All the ingredients were at hand for another attempt to solve one enigma (the Amazons) by another (the Hittites). The hostilities in which Priamos was engaged were situated in the Phrygian empire, not far from the

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[190] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, pp. 23–25.

[191] Tyrrell presents a fuller account of this thesis in his "Amazon Customs and Athenian Patriarchy", *ANSP*, s. III, vol. VII, 1982, pp. 1213–1237.

[192] The formulae (*Iliad* III, 189 and VI, 186) cannot be dated securely (see below, p. 185ff).

Hittite centre. Furthermore, the archaeological record—art, tomb remains and inscriptions—indicated the the Hittite queen held a very important position. What is more, Hittite men—unlike Greek men—were clean-shaven, which might have led them to be mistaken for women.[193]

W. Leonhard's monograph *Hettiter und Amazonen* (1911) laid the foundation of the Hittite thesis. His extensively documented argument begins with a review of all the testimonia bearing on the Amazons and which can be historically and geographically brought under the sphere of influence of the Hittite empire. He then describes Hittite culture, within the limits of knowledge at that time, in a way which makes the connection with the Amazons practically unavoidable. Finally, he demonstrates that the Hittites were matriarchal and practised a cult of the Great Goddess in which countless castrated male priests featured. It was these [hierodouloi], he argued, who were taken to be women under the influence of the association with matriarchy, and on whom the mythical Amazons were based.[194]

Leonhard's monograph combines virtually every current of nineteenth-century interpretation of the Amazons. Although he fails to refer to Creuzer or K.O. Müller, there are striking elements recalling their work. He makes much use of etymology, while making considerable use of Klügmann's article on eponymy, in which the etymological method was viewed with circumspection. Matriarchy, as we have seen, was a stock feature of the speculative systems of the development of humanity, and the Amazons were an equally stock feature of matriarchy. Leonhard's study differs from the Skythian interpretation in the importance attached to chronology, but it is the nature of the argument which calls for treatment here. Leonhard claims that the image of the Amazons was created by a misinterpretation of the customs of a different people—in this case, the Greek interpretation of the more or less male Hittite priests and of matriarchy. That is the core of the myth. The temporal distance that he is bound to assume between the Hittite core and the Greek (mis)interpretation sets his argument apart from the other ethnographic interpretations which paid scant attention to chronology, but it is not itself the source of the mythopoesis. As in the Skythian interpretation, the assumption is that confusion arose as to the gender of the other.

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[193] The question of the absence of facial hair recurs in an article by the bacteriologist K.A. Bisset, "Who were the Amazons?", *G&R* 18, 1971, pp. 150–151. It is curious to note how the Amazons have attracted the attention of interested non-professionals.

[194] Leonhard, *Hettiter und Amazonen*, pp. 136ff. Leonhard's thesis was accepted, with revisions, by the mathematician Samuel, *Amazones*, in the revised German edition of his book *Amazonen, Kriegerinnen und Kraftfrauen*, pp. 113–120; and Cornelius, *Geschichte der Hethiter*.

To judge from the dates of publication of the main studies, it can be stated that the ethnographic interpretation was gaining ground at the end of the nineteenth century and that it has continued to win support ever since. This change can be understood if we conclude that the extremely historicizing views of the first half of the nineteenth century now failed to satisfy. In 1875 Klügmann rejected Romantic speculations about the past as unscientific. Submerged cultural strata, matriarchy and the rest were no longer regarded as suitable objects of study for professional historians by the second half of the century. Romantic conceptions came under fire from a different quarter in the publications of interested non-professionals who rejected the entire scholarly approach to mythology as a display of academic hair-splitting which had little to do with reality. For instance, in 1862 A.D. Mordtmann stated that it was sufficient to look around in Anatolia to see that the Amazons had really existed.[195]

On the other hand, the etymologies had a good academic reputation. In the study of mythology, they had come to occupy such a pre-eminent position by now that they shifted the focus to non-Greek linguistic areas and non-Greek peoples. In a similar way, the exclusively feminine character of the Amazons, which formed the core of the myth for Creuzer and Müller, came to occupy a less prominent position in the ethnological approach too. In the second half of the nineteenth century the etymologies failed to provide a convincing explanation for the discrepancy between the gender of the Amazons and the linguistic development of the word [Amazones], and in the end the search for a female concept was given up altogether. Similarly, it was unclear in the ethnological explanations why the Greeks had converted their original perception into the image of a people consisting of a single gender. This shift *vis-à-vis* the Romantic interpretations brings two main issues into prominence. First, the ethnological interpretations are an argumentum e silentio for the fact that the femininity of the Amazons retained its link with the non-historical past. Second, the discrepancy introduced by ethnography between the alleged perception of a people and the Amazons of the myths can be pinpointed as the speculative moment between the analysis of the mythic stories and the choice of a mythic core. Most ethnographic interpretations do not betray any awareness of this sexual metamorphosis; the exception, Leonhard, fell back on the old [hierodoulos] thesis.

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[195] A.D. Mordtmann, *Die Amazonen. Ein Beitrag zur unbefangenen Prüfung und Würdigung der ältesten Ueberlieferungen*, Hannover 1862. His study of classics under the influence of Creuzer, Niebuhr and Buttmann, p. iv; his realization that this knowledge was useless because it had no contact with reality, pp. v–vi; his views on negroes, p. 30; Amazons in Dahomey, pp. 30–31; use of Creuzer's *Symbolik* and the etymologies contained in it (without quoting sources), pp. 31–32, etc. Samuel also attacked the aridity of the mythologists; his *Amazonen* presents a long series of strong and warlike women from the world of history, sport and recreation.

All the same, the new interpretations were still based on a historicizing vision, which continued to exert an influence in different ways. Even if the mythic core of the Amazons was no longer sought *par excellence* in the murky era which preceded Greek culture, it was nevertheless placed outside Greek cultural history. The ancient testimonia were scrutinized for traces of foreign peoples, and these elements were used to reconstruct the society which had led to the Amazons. In other words, the core was still located outside the historical, narrative myth, but now the past was situated outside the Greek cultural area with which it had been in some form of contact. It is precisely here, in this difference between history and what is at times almost a synchronic past, that the sexual metamorphosis can be situated as well. Apparently, the scholars in question considered that the core could unproblematically change sex during the transition from one sphere (past, foreign people) to another (history, Greek culture). It is striking that, in this train of thought, the femininity of the Amazons, which was the reason for Creuzer and Müller to situate them in the past, was included in history in a neutralized form which did not call for special treatment. We have already noted this manoeuvre in the studies by Klügmann; the great reputation that they enjoyed among ancient historians can be gauged from the way they were followed in the major lexicons.

The ethnographic derivation rendered the Amazons harmless, for the potentially disturbing combination of femininity with a warlike temperament was now taken to be the result of a misinterpretation. This move also liberated Greek culture itself from responsibility for these unsettling women: at most the Greeks had elaborated on a misunderstanding, but they had not themselves created the image of these female warriors.

From "myth and ritual" to structuralism

In the last decennium of the nineteenth century the study of mythology was affected by new approaches which were connected with the wave of change sweeping over the whole field of the human sciences. This process was the result of the value which was once more being assigned to the irrational aspects of the human mind. Research in the human and cultural sciences was now expected to include the role of the irrational and the affects systematically in its objectives and interpretations. This was so hard to reconcile with the classical humanist predilection for the self-conscious, autonomous and rational human being that the new inquiry first developed alongside the positive sciences, and only managed to supplant the latter to a certain extent later on. In his classic *Consciousness and Society*, H. Stuart Hughes describes the manifestations of this "revolt against positivism" in the various disciplines.[196] Stocking sees one of its most important effects in the break with the German historicist heritage and with evolutionism.[197]

The study of mythology clearly reveals the influence of this new paradigm.[198] The role assigned to myth and religion in this new vision can be ascertained from the straightforward account by Jane Harrison, one of the founders of the "myth and ritual" approach to the study of myth, which may be regarded as typical of the first stages in the growth of this paradigm:

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[196] H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society. The Reorientation of European Social Thought 1890–1930*, Toronto/New York 1958, Ch. 2.

[197] Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, pp. 284ff.

[198] That one can speak of a new paradigm is proved by the acrimonious exchanges which demonstrated the irreconcilable conflict between the old vision and the new. See e.g. Versnel, "What's Sauce for the Goose".

> [. . .] the general principle that social structure and the collective conscience which utters itself in social structure, underlie all religion.[199]

The meaning and origin of myth were now to be sought in the human mind. Myth was taken to express a collective consciousness or a (collective) unconscious. This marked a revival of the Romantic preoccupation with the mythopoetic faculties of the human mind, but without the Romantic notion that this social psychological function replaced the historical explanation of the mythic core. At first the historicizing vision continued to exert some influence, as the two major currents in new mythological research at the turn of the century, viz. the "myth and ritual" approach and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, continued to take the time factor into account in their analysis of myth.[200] All the same, it came to acquire a different, more subordinate role, so that a debate of the kind that Klügmann had held with his predecessors was no longer thinkable. In due course the historical aspect was increasingly relegated to the background. This can be seen from the functionalist approach which came to prominence between the two wars and which was associated in the first place with the anthropologist B. Malinowski. The historical factor hardly features at all in functionalism, which emphasized how myths bring about a cultural cohesion and can thus be regarded as a sort of social contract.[201] Finally, in the 1960s the structuralism of C. Lévi-Strauss was to assume a position which can be characterized as fundamentally ahistorical.

An impression of the tentative reorientation of interpretations of the Amazon myth can be gauged from an article entitled "Sociological Hypotheses Concerning the position of Women in

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[199] Harrison, *Themis. A Study in the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, p. xxii. She is here implicitly referring to the views of E. Durkheim and H. Bergson, two philosophers who played a key role in the new developments.

[200] The so-called analytical psychology which Carl Gustav Jung developed in the early years of the twentieth century reveals to a certain extent a rehabilitation of the idealist *Stufentheorie*; for the relation between Jung and Bachofen and the place of the Amazons in this research, see my "Sexual Asymmetry".

[201] The role of myth in social cohesion recurs in Kirk's account, where he characterizes mythopoetic culture as marked by "[. . .] a way of life in which the only forms of mass-communication (as distinct from practical communication between individuals) are ritual on the one hand, story-telling on the other", *Nature*, p. 29. It is precisely the historical dimension which interests Kirk.

Ancient Religion" by L. Farnell, a moderate supporter of the "myth and ritual" approach who wanted to test Bachofen's hypothesis against recent scholarship. He uses the term "sociological" in the sense of a collective unconscious mentality, a socio-cultural system directly connected with the kinship system, with vague historical connotations which recall evolutionist thought.[202] It may be their position as pioneers in the study of mythology that led some of the "myth and ritual" school to adopt strong opposition to historicizing views in their extreme form. This is true of Farnell's attack on Bachofen, and of F.M. Bennett's attack on Leonhard, whose Hittite interpretation appeared one year before Bennett's own interpretation.[203] The French archaeologist Ch. Picard, who initiated a series of publications on the Amazons in the 1930s, also saw a ritual background in the Amazons' connection with the temple in Ephesos. Picard vehemently cited the criticisms of Leonhard's interpretation by the Hittite scholar R. Dussaud, and proceeded to involve Rostovzeff in the debate, who had taken up an ambivalent position on whether the origin of the Amazon myth lay in historical reality or creative projection. Picard applied the terms "sociologique" and "social" to Rostovzeff's argument,[204] terms which could evoke associations both with kinship systems and with "culture" or "mentality". In this way, he rhetorically effected a transition from the historico-temporal to the ritual.

To sum up, the reorientation of research on mythology that began in the 1890s can be characterized as a programme that sought the origin of myth in the psychical or social condition of humanity. Theories were therefore orientated toward this psychical or social function, while less and less attention was devoted to the historical circumstances and transformations which the myth underwent in the course of time. The effect of this reorientation on interpretations of the Amazon myth, however, is conspicuously absent, and the innovative potential of the new approach for a total review of the image of the Amazons was not realized until the 1970s. The way in which the traditional view of the Amazons was dealt with in the intervening period can be gauged from a few representative publications.

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[202] L. Farnell, "Sociological Hypotheses Concerning the Position of Women in Ancient Religion", *ARW* 17, 1904, pp. 70–94. The same reminiscence of successive "social" stages also underlies Harrison's *Themis*, 1912/1963, pp. xxi–xxii. Bachofen's thesis and the researches connected with it already formed the starting point for Farnell's inquiry, which naturally implied an approach to history in stages. Bachofen's views cannot be called directly evolutionist because they are so permeated by German idealism, but the idea of the development of history in stages was also one of the principles of evolutionism, and in its Anglo-Saxon variant this formed Farnell's frame of reference.

[203] F.M. Bennett, *Religious Cults Associated with the Amazons*, New York 1912, pp. 73–74. The author also used the name Anderson.

[204] Ch. Picard, "L'Ephesia, les Amazones et les abeilles", *REA* 42, 1940, pp. 270–284; p. 275.

In 1912 Florence Mary Bennett published the results of her investigation into the cults and rituals with which the Amazons were associated in Greek tradition. She adhered closely to the precepts of the "myth and ritual" school by collecting examples of these cults and then proceeding to regard this corpus as the most reliable information for the discovery of the meaning of the Amazon myth.[205] She concluded:

> [. . .] the Amazons were votaries of Cybele, Artemis under the surnames of Ephesia, Tauropolos, Lyceia, and Astrateia, Apollo called Amazonian, and Ares. The striking feature of the list is the homogeneity of its components [. . .]. It must be concluded that these women were associated with the cults of primitive deities of fertility and war, among whom a Woman was the chief figure, and of whom the rites were orgiastic. In historical times such cults may be classed as Thracian-Phrygian, and they are to be referred to the people who inherited both the blood and the spiritual traditions of the great pre-historic civilisation of the Aegean basin, of which the brilliant centre seems to have been Crete.[206]

She rejected the Kimmerian and Sauromatian interpretation, the [hierodouloi] interpretation, the Hittite thesis, and related ideas that the Amazons were clean-shaven men who were mistaken for women. Finally, she explained the Amazons as follows:

> [The Amazons] belong to the early matriarchate, which left traces in Caria and Lycia [. . .] the tradition [. . .] preserves memories of a time when women held the important place in state and religion in Aegean lands, and that they reflect the goddess of this civilisation.[207]

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[205] Her sources of inspiration are indicated in her bibliography: Sir James Frazer's *Golden Bough* (1890–) and the writings of L. Farnell and Jane Harrison.

[206] Bennett, *Religious Cults*, p. 73.

[207] Bennett, *Religious Cults*, pp. 75–76.

This brings us back to the views of Bachofen, Rostovzeff and other proponents of the idea of a submerged, matriarchal culture. The Amazons are not seen as women who carried out their martial role in connection with a ritual—no trace of Creuzer is to be found by this stage—but first and foremost as figures from the matriarchal past, of which the ritual data form the residue. How are we to account for this view?

The "myth and ritual" approach treated the ritual as the mythical core. Sometimes this ritual was still observed, as in the case of the cyclical ritual reconstructed by G. Dumézil on the basis of the data on the fire ritual on Lemnos and the myth of the Lemnian women, which was already associated with the Amazons in antiquity.[208] It was more common for the ritual to have fallen into disuse and for the myth to have survived as a distorted reflection. The extraordinary images which were so characteristic of myths were therefore taken as indicators of the caesura which had arisen between myth and ritual.[209] In the last resort, the definition of ritual as the content of myth was based on two far-reaching assumptions. First, the combination of myth and ritual was taken to be typical of the collective mentality which it expressed. In terms of function, myth and ritual were extensions of one another: they were both supposed to guarantee social cohesion.[210] As this was a general human psychical faculty, the deciphering of a myth provided a glimpse into a deeper layer of the human mind. The gap between myth and core was thus no literal gap, but a spatial metaphor expressing the discrepancy between reason and unconscious or elementary emotional states.[211] The collective (un)conscious as a source of rituals and thus as a human mythopoetic faculty (compare K.O. Müller) was taken to be a timeless factor, a universal psychical or socio-psychical phenomenon. However, the idea lives on in the background that this mentality was primarily manifested in a very remote past which is still in need of reconstruction (compare K.O. Müller and Creuzer). Moreover, since many myths were not associated with a corresponding ritual (any more), this stage acquired the familiar form of a submerged past, which could only be brought to light by means of a specific comparative method. The somewhat mysterious character of many rituals, which had to be reconstructed from myths or other clues, thus led to a revival of historicizing interpretations. This version of the "myth and ritual" approach proved to be closely associated with the preceding historicizing interpretations.

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[208] G. Dumézil, *Le crime des Lemniennes. Rites et légendes du monde Egéen*, Paris 1924; cf. also W. Burkert, "Jason, Hypsipyle and New Fire at Lemnos", *CQ* 20, 1970, pp. 1–16; and R.P. Martin, "Fire on the Mountain: *Lysistrata* and the Lemnian Women", *CA* 6, 1987, pp. 77–105. These women too lived—for a time—without men. In anger at the inadequacy of their sacrifices, Aphrodite punished them with a repulsive body odour. The men therefore resorted to other women (female slaves), at which the women of Lemnos, led by their queen Hypsipyle, killed their husbands. After a while, Iason and the Argonauts reached the shore of the island. The sexual frustrations of the Lemnian women (and of the Argonauts as well) could now be relieved and the population of Lemnos was saved from extinction. Both themes appear to have been combined in Attic comedy (here referred to in the edition *PCG* (Kassel-Austin). Besides Kephisodoros' *Amazons* (nos. 1–2), Kratinos' *Children of Euneos* (nos. 71–72) (ca. 430) treated the theme of a son Euneos, born to Iason by an Amazon queen, Hypsipyle. Hypsipyle was also accredited with a mother called Myrrina, which is the name of both a city on Lemnos and of one of the Amazons (*Il.* II, 814; see too Martin, "Fire on the Mountain", p. 87 and n. 36). Strattis' comedy *Lemnomeda* (nos. 23–26) is about an Andromeda, who is also identified with Hypsipyle; Andromeda regularly occurs as an Amazon name in vase-painting. The comedy is supposed to have been a parody of the Euripidean tragedies *Hypsipyle* and *Andromeda* (both dating from ca. 410). The *Lemnomeda* is dated about 392, in view of the occupation of Lemnos by Athens at that time. Aristophanes wrote a comedy called *Lemnian Women* (nos. 372–391) at about the same time. In Middle Comedy Antiphanes' *Lemnian Women* (nos. 142–143), Alexis' *Lemnian Affairs* (no. 139) and Epikrates' *Amazons* (no. 1) bear witness to the same interest.

[209] Generally speaking, the precise relation between myth and ritual was never formulated in a completely satisfactory manner by the ritualist school, as Versnel demonstrates in "What's Sauce for the Goose".

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[210] Thus Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, pp. 321ff. stresses that the "myth and ritual" approach prepared the way for the functionalist approach to myth.

[211] The terms "unconscious" and "collective unconscious" can no longer be treated independently of their regular position in the systems of Freud and Jung. As far as the first term is concerned this does not raise any problems, since a figure such as Harrison was clearly influenced by Freud, see R. Schlesier, "Jane Ellen Harrison", in *Classical Scholarship. A Biographical Encyclopedia*, W.W. Briggs and W.M. Calder III, eds., New York/London 1990; R. Schlesier, "Prolegomena to Jane Harrison's Interpretation of Ancient Greek Religion", in *The Cambridge Ritualists Reconsidered*, W.M. Calder III, ed., Atlanta 1991, pp. 185–226. All the same, what we might call the ritual faculty is also used as a broader, more general and vaguer notion: no doubt it is closely connected with the irrational as a source of desires, but also in the form of "enacting". The fact that this faculty is manifested in culturally different but nevertheless clearly delineated patterns of belief and ritual links the unconscious again with the representation of a *homo ludens avant la lettre.* Unlike systematic thinkers such as Freud and Jung, however, the members of the ritualist school were never explicit about the position or content of this faculty in the human psyche.

As Bennett's monograph illustrates, this was certainly the case as far as the Amazon myth was concerned. Nor was the maintenance of the historicizing vision confined to the "myth and ritual" school. Generally speaking, the new approaches no longer treated the difference between mythical narrative and mythical core as a real disparity in time or space, as the nineteenth-century theorists had it, but they tended to give this discrepancy a metaphorical meaning. Once it came to the Amazons, however, the historicizing tradition gained the upper hand. The Amazons were relentlessly relegated to the past, usually understood as the period of a prehistoric matriarchy, and were regarded as unchanging, actual figures. The symbolic mechanism continued to operate, the symbolic position of the Amazons *vis-à-vis* the shifting fields of knowledge resisted a genuine reappraisal. As we shall shortly see, the same conclusion can be drawn with regard to the psychoanalytical approach.

In a certain sense, the new approaches which came into vogue after 1890 appeared to have solved one of the key problems of the study of mythology: in theory, they regarded the origin as a given. There was no longer any need to search for a temporal or spatial origin, since myth was a product of the psyche. All that was necessary was to situate its position in the psyche more precisely. Even if an extra-psychic source was assumed, the significance of the myth for the mentality of the narrators still occupied pride of place in the last resort. An example of the latter point of view is provided by Tyrrell's interpretation, in which a structural analysis of the Amazon myth is combined with the assumption that the Amazons are derived from the Sauromatians; the accuracy of the perception is less important than the reception which he assumes the myth to have enjoyed in the Attic world. In some publications the shared assumption that the myth has a psychical function leads to an overlapping of different approaches. Tyrrell exemplifies this as well: he adopts a structuralist system of inversions, but at the same time he regards fear of femininity as the driving force behind the system.[212]

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[212] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, esp. pp. 88ff.

It is easiest to indicate the differences between the various tendencies at the theoretical level; the most well-known are Freudian psychoanalysis, Jungian analytical psychology, and in recent years the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss, with its emphatic claim to distance itself from the Freudian tradition.[213] This is not the place to discuss these theories in detail; the following remarks will be confined to the major interpretations of the Amazon myth which have emerged from them.

It is remarkable that, to the best of my knowledge, no systematic psychoanalytic study of the Amazon myth has been conducted to date,[214] but it has certainly influenced some research on the subject. In an interpretation of the Amazon myth which is clearly written under the banner of psychoanalysis, Bernice Schultz Engle follows a strategy of alternately accepting and criticizing the historicizing tradition:

> Several modern historians have attempted to identify the Amazons with various tribes or classes of people such as Hittites or

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[213] It is no coincidence that Lévi-Strauss chose the example of the myth of Oidipous to illustrate the full force of his interpretive innovation, *Anthropologie Structurale*, Paris 1958, Ch. xi; J.-P. Vernant, who was for years one of the main proponents of structuralism in the analysis of Greek mythology, along with M. Detienne, did the same; in order to sharpen the theoretical debate, he called his article "Oedipe sans complexe", J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Mythe et tragédie en Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1977, pp. 77–98. See too M.P. Carroll, "Lévi-Strauss on the Oedipus Myth: a Reconsideration", *American Anthropologist* 80, 1978, pp. 805–814; A. Neschke-Hentske, "Griechischer Mythos und strukturale Anthropologie: Kritische Bemerkungen zu Claude Lévi-Strauss' Methode der Mythendeutung", *Poetica* 10, 1978, pp. 135–153; Ch. Segal, "Pentheus and Hippolytos on the Couch and on the Grid: Psychoanalytic and Structuralist Readings of Greek Tragedy", *CW* 72, 1978/79, pp. 129–148.

[214] A Freudian psychoanalytical framework is evident in P. Mason, *The City of Men: Ideology, Sexual Politics and the Social Formation*, Göttingen/Aachen 1984. He too discusses the Oidipous myth (pp. 35ff.), but pays hardly any attention to the myth of the Amazons. There are plenty of Amazons in E.C. Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus*, New York etc. 1985, including the illustration of an Amazonomachy on the cover. Despite the suggestive title, however, Keuls' account of the Greek battle of the sexes can hardly be characterized as a psychoanalytically informed text; where she abandons the vague terrain of "common sense" psychology, to which most historians prefer to appeal (compare P. Gay, *Freud for Historians*, New York/Oxford 1985), it is usually to cite from Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother. An Analysis of the Archetype*, New York 1963, who is a follower of Jung, not of Freud. She also draws on the representatives of the ritualist school. Psychoanalytical interpretations can be found in the oeuvre of G. Devereux, such as *Femme et Mythe*, Paris 1982, where the distinction between male and female, conceived as the distinction between active and passive, plays a large part.

> armed priestesses. Other writers believe that knowledge for positive conclusions is still lacking. A few dismiss the Amazons as mere fairy-tale creatures. But serious critics of Greek mythology like Bachofen, Weigert, and Turel have emphasized the psychological importance to classical Greek civilization of Amazonian legends whether Amazons actually existed or not.
>
> To show that the Amazons were real people, although their exact race and civilization have not yet been determined, is one of the two purposes of this paper. [The other is to demonstrate that Amazonian cults and legends were replete with the age-old conflict between the sexes.] Greek men seemed constantly to fear that women would overpower them and take away their privileges. On the other side, the women [i.e. the Amazons] practiced great cruelty and sadism toward not only men but also children. Amazonomachia had therefore deep psychological importance for the ancient Greeks.[215]

Schultz Engle's argument follows a curious trajectory. In the first part of her article she attempts to argue that Greek men were obsessed with a fear of women and therefore bore them a deep hatred. This misogyny can be seen at its clearest in the Greek stories of the Amazons. The legend (by which she means the tradition which harks back to a historical reality) is also one of the foundations of this hatred based on fear. She illustrates the intensity of this emotion with a long list of negative epithets which the Amazons received in the Greek tradition.[216] In other words, the aggression towards the Amazons reflected in the myths can only be understood on the assumption that women really had set themselves up as the enemies of men at some time. It is no easy task to reconstruct this historical reality, but thanks to . . . at this point the article follows the familiar course of bringing to light hidden prehistoric periods.

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[215] B. Schultz Engle, "The Amazons in Early Greece", *Psychoanalytical Quarterly* 11, 1942, pp. 512–554; the citation is taken from pp. 512–513. She refers to E. Weigert, "The Cult and Mythology of the Magna Mater from the Standpoint of Psychoanalysis", *Psychiatry* I, 1938, pp. 347–381; A. Turel, *Bachofen-Freud: zur Emanzipation des Mannes vom Reich der Mütter*, Bern 1939. Of course, the interpretation attributed to Bachofen in this citation could not be wider off the mark. Schultz Engle pays most attention to a description of the Amazons themselves, and only deals with their psychological significance to a much lesser extent.

[216] Schultz Engle, "The Amazons", p. 518. The author claims that these epithets show how much the Amazons hated men and thus how much Greek men hated Amazons. For my view of the epithets see below, Chapter II.

Schultz Engle's article bypasses the psychoanalytical view which assumes the fictional character of such hostile representations, even if the conflict experienced at the level of fantasy results in strong emotions. In this respect Schultz Engle is following the route outlined in Freud's *Totem und Tabu* of 1913, a work which certainly did not represent the most innovative side of Freud's work or of that of his followers.[217] We can here see the strength of the historicizing tradition to which Freud was receptive in his speculations on cultural history. Although he was the intellectual author *par excellence* of the analysis of the individual psyche and primarily regarded culture in this light as the product of an intrapsychic process, his *Totem and Tabu* abandoned the specific and metaphorical meaning of the psychical dimension. In this work he transferred the origin of the Oidipous complex from the childhood of the individual to the childhood of humanity, and it is typical that in doing so he also replaced the character of this complex as a fantasy by a realistic representation: a genuine matriarchy replaced a mother who was believed to be omnipotent, and the genuine killing of the leader of the horde replaced the fear of parricide.[218]

Another psychoanalytically inclined work in which the Amazons are considered is Philip Slater's monograph on the affective "interior" of the classical Athenian family.[219] This is an attempt to map the anxieties, ambivalencies and conflicts which he supposed to have been the inevitable concomitants of this culture, dominated as it was by segregation of the sexes and male domination. Various shorter studies, well represented by an article by C. Segal,[220] deal with this theme. Segal presents a psychoanalytical and a structural reading of Pentheus and Hippolytos, as these mythological figures are presented in Euripides' *Bacchae* and *Hippolytos* respectively. Such studies epitomize an attempt to provide a systematic interpretation of the images and associations which were implied by the Greek representations of masculinity and femininity. The interpretations of the Amazons cannot be read apart from this context, but cited in isolation, they still provide some kind of picture. Slater treats myths as the clearest expressions of his theme, and regards the (love) lives of the heroes as proof:

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[217] For a pluriform assessment of psychoanalytical theory see e.g. Md. Mujeeb-ur-Rahman, ed., *The Freudian Paradigm. Psychoanalysis and Scientific Thought*, Chicago 1977.

[218] C.G. Jung replaced Freud's intrapsychic models by the principle of collective representations and set them within the framework of a theory of stages. In those texts in which these views were combined with the tradition of Bachofen, thereby bringing together two visions within German idealism, this conception of temporally successive stages of consciousness becomes a hermetic whole. The Amazons belong to this world of ideas in a world governed by mothers and determined by Mother Goddesses and the related archetypical figures. It is a utopian era in which the link between mother and child has not yet been severed and women derive power and solidarity from their social prominence. See e.g. R. Briffault, *The Mothers: a Study of the Origins of Sentiments and Institutions*, New York 1927; [B. Eckstein-Diener] Sir Galahad, *Mütter und Amazonen. Ein Umriss weiblicher Reiche*, München 1932; E. Bornemann, *Das Patriarchat. Ursprung und Zukunft unseres Gesellschaftssystems*, Frankfurt a/Main 1975; H. Göttner-Abendroth, *Die Göttin und ihr Heros. Die matriarchalen Religionen in Mythos, Märchen und Dichtung*, Munich 1980.

[219] P. Slater, *The Glory of Hera. Greek Mythology and the Greek Family*, Boston 1968.

> Theseus also had a preference for youthful and boyish women [. . .]. Theseus also had an Amazon bride, Antiope, whom he eventually killed when she jealously threatened to disrupt his wedding to Phaedra (Apollodorus, *Ep.* i, 17). She is also said to have fought on his side when he repelled the Amazonian invasion of Attica (Plutarch, *Theseus*, 27).
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> Athenian sex antagonism necessitated the assignment to Theseus of the victory over the Amazons, whatever other factors, including history, may have contributed to it*. This victory seems to have been regarded with even more reverence than Theseus' alleged democratic innovations and the unification of Attica [. . .]. That Athens' rise should be tied to a victory over women seems quite in keeping with the misogyny of Athenian thought.
>
> > * (note 24) There is a little too much ethnographic and circumstantial detail about the Amazons and the Amazon war to dismiss the entire episode as pure myth [. . .]. Yet it seems likely that the Victory Over The Women, so conspicuous in Athenian lore, primarily describes an event in the emotional life of each male child.[221]

Slater thus hesitates as to the place to be assigned to the Amazons in reality. Although he does not go so far as Schultz Engle, he cannot escape entirely from the influence of the historical interpretation, which was so much indebted to the Greek Amazonology, and thereby he abandons his psychoanalytical framework.

Segal leaves this theme alone and concentrates on representations in tragedy. The inequality between the sexes in Athens formed the breeding ground for neuroses which can be clearly defined and traced. They prevented adult males from having a balanced relation with a woman without the fear of endangering their own manhood. Segal is also of the opinion that the transition from a virgin girl to a sexually ripe woman was experienced as abrupt and laden with conflict in classical Athens, and that men in particular experienced it in the same way.

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[220] Segal, "Pentheus and Hippolytos".

[221] Slater, *The Glory of Hera*, pp. 392–393.

> Consorting with his goddess in the wild and thus outside the framework of civilized life, Hippolytos lives out the emotional consequences of having as mother an Amazon,[222] a figure on the periphery of civilization, as Aeschylus stresses in the *Eumenides* (cf. 625–28; 685–90). The virginal female warrior shuns men and has no place in a normal *oikos*. Her status as Hippolytos' mother is due to Theseus' violent conquest and rape [. . .] his extreme attachment to a sexually pure maternal figure [viz. the virginal but adult Artemis, Mistress of Nature] as a replacement for the Amazon mother he has lost, leads him to leave house and city for the wild forests. But those wild places where he hunts and consorts with his virgin goddess—the uncut meadow where no agriculture is practiced, the shore where he rides his horses and meets his death from the sea and the bull—are both symbols of unresolved sexual conflicts and simultaneously places which negate the *polis*-life which he has rejected.
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> [. . .] As virgin and hunter both, Hippolytos is in a sense uncivilized [. . .]. Yet he gains a heroic status in the civilized world as a cultfigure to whom girls at marriage dedicate their offering of hair.[223]

Segal's appeal to psychoanalysis demonstrates an important correction to the structural model, at least as it appears in the studies by Tyrrell and P. DuBois.[224] The latter interpret the structural binary oppositions as a polarity between masculinity and femininity, without according much in the way of nuances to these concepts in general.[225] In his treatment of the same theme, Segal differentiates between young virgins and adult, sexually active women, and he offers extensive arguments for the significance of this distinction at the level of the imagination.

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[222] Antiope, who was abducted and then abandoned by Theseus for Phaidra. The theme of the *Hippolytos* is Phaidra's passion for her stepson and his inability to reach a balance between the force of attraction of the goddess Artemis (who also represents the Amazons) and that of the goddess Aphrodite (who demonstrates her power in sexual love). See too Ch. IV below.

[223] Segal, "Pentheus and Hippolytos", pp. 137–138.

[224] P. DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons. Women and the Pre-History of the Great Chain of Being*, Ann Arbor 1982.

[225] Such an undifferentiated image of femininity and masculinity is by no

Segal's article is a better example of the application of psychoanalysis than the examples of Schultz Engle and Slater. While Schultz Engle assigns considerable importance to the alleged historicity of the Amazons, and Slater adopts an ambivalent position in this respect, they both regard the myths as a more or less direct reflection of contemporary classical society. They pay no attention to the peculiarities of the mythical idiom. Segal, however, does so, referring to Freud's *Die Traumdeutung* of 1900. The correspondence between the psychodynamics of dreaming and mythopoesis was discussed in detail by Freud himself, and it has been accepted by students of mythology who refer to the dreamlike character of myths.[226] One could say that the unconscious, in all its stratification, contains the (metaphorical) space in the individual psyche, while the process of growing up contains the temporal factor. The latter, however, also acquires a metaphorical character because, *in the unconscious*, the historical time sequence loses its form and results in a non-chronological residue of affects. If this combination of phenomena is regarded as the content of myth, it is logical that the expression in images and words follows the same procedures as in dreams. A psychoanalytical interpretation of myth must therefore be able to provide an explanation of the structural changes which the emotions undergo when they are represented in myths.[227] Time occupies a clear and necessary place *within the narrative* of the myth: according to this psychoanalytic view, the passage of time in the narration itself reveals a process of growing awareness. In Sophokles'

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means typical of structural interpretations in general, as can be seen from the publications based on this approach that are further utilized in the present study, such as those by Vernant, Detienne, Loraux, Schmitt-Pantel and others.

[226] See e.g. the summary in Kirk, *Nature*, pp. 41 and 71.

[227] These remarks apply to an interpretation which is explicitly situated within psychoanalytic theory. Numerous problems therefore remain. To mention only a couple of classic problems: how is one to argue from a theory orientated toward the individual to statements which concern collective entities? Under what conditions are Freud's insights applicable outside his time and place? For an optimistic approach to these basic questions, see Gay, *Freud for Historians*. Since treatment of these questions woud lead us far beyond the interpretations of the Amazon myth, I shall leave them for what they are.

Oedipus Rex, Oidipous was in the dark until he gained insight into the actual state of affairs.

Generally speaking, the question of the historical dimension in Jung's analytical psychology follows Freud: it is either left out of account, as in the latter's *Die Traumdeutung*, or resolved in an unsatisfactory way, as in Freud's *Totem und Tabu*. However, this is not the place to go into the fine points of psychoanalysis nor Jung's theory of archetypes. The influence of Jung's ideas on the interpretation of the Amazon myth can be found in two different approaches. The most striking variant is to be seen in those texts which interpret his representation of the archetypes as an expression of historical developments. This idea is perfectly in line with the speculative systems of the nineteenth century, and in particular the post-Bachofen idealist tradition.[228] These texts can be summarily described as psychologizing exegeses of Bachofen. The best-known example in the world of classical mythology is the work of K. Kerényi, who was evidently, though not predominantly, influenced by Jung.[229] However, his contribution to the understanding of the Amazon myth is marginal, since he limited his remarks to a retelling of some of the Greek myths in which the Amazons appear.[230]

Another interpretation of the Amazons which abandons the question of their historicism to concentrate on the psycho-social function of the myth is Mandy Merck's article "The City's Achievements", dating from the same year as Segal's article.[231] Merck does not make her theoretical position explicit, but her interpretation is based on a general functionalist approach to myth which had become common knowledge by this time. The need for cohesion in a society is taken to be expressed in commonly experienced myths. Their content and purport are such that they work as a mental social contract, the oil in the mechanism of society. Myths are not the result of intra-psychic wishes or conflict management, but serve the socio-psychical demand for order and foundations.[232]

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[228] See above, note 23.

[229] Burkert, "Griechische Mythologie", pp. 191–194.

[230] K. (C.) Kerényi, *The Heroes of the Greeks*, London 1959, pp. 242–246.

[231] M. Merck, "The City's Achievements. The Patriotic Amazonomachy in Ancient Athens", in S. Lipshitz, ed., *Tearing the Veil. Essays on Femininity*, London 1978, pp. 95–115.

[232] Since myths also explicitly create order in the universe at both a real

It is reasonable to trace this view back to the more strictly defined charter theory of B. Malinowski. Merck sees the Amazon myth as a kind of charter too:

> The Amazons, I would argue, are not introduced into myth as an independent force, but as the vanquished opponents of heroes credited with the establishment and protection of the Athenian state, its *founding fathers*, so to speak. Patriotism reinforces patriarchalism to define the tribeswomen as opponents of the State. [. . .] Second, it locates the myth within the context of Athenian misogyny, where it may have functioned as a justification of that culture's radical subordination of women.[233]

In her article, patriarchy no longer has the meaning of a specific kind of kinship system, but it functions as a sort of code. In the terminology of women's studies in the seventies, patriarchy was taken to refer to a combination of institutions, norms and values which brought about the subordination of women to men. Merck took the Amazon myth to have the same legitimizing function in Athens. She pays little attention to the question of the origins of the different elements of the myth, and none at all to the problem of the relation between mythical representations and other forms of expression.

As there is no other functional interpretation of the Amazon myth which goes beyond Merck's article in a more detailed or systematic way, this school of interpretation can be left at this point.

The idea that the exclusion of women or the subordination of women to men is a theme inherent in the Amazon myth is also claimed by Tyrrell and DuBois, but their theoretical arguments are of an entirely different kind. Both Page DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons. Women and the Pre-History of the Great Chain of Being* (1982) and William Blake Tyrrell, *Amazons, A Study in Athenian Mythmaking*

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and a metaphysical level, Malinowski's view has been able to serve as an intermediary between Freud and Lévi-Strauss. Cf. Strenski, *Four Theories*, and Doty, *Mythography*, p. 199. On Malinowski's reaction to Freud's work see his *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*, Oxford/London 1927.

[233] Merck, "The City's Achievements", p. 96; emphasis added. Merck concludes her account by presenting the Amazon myth as a contract myth, though for the feminist movement. With this reversal of poles, the Amazon myth functioned as a charter for certain feminist currents in the late 1970s and early 1980s. For a protest against this reuse of the Amazon myth, see the excellent survey of the Amazon debate by Beate Wagner-Hasel, "Männerfeindliche Jungfrauen? Ein kritischer Blick auf Amazonen in Mythos und Geschichte", *Feministische Studien* 5, 1986, pp. 86–105.

(1984) represent an approach to Greek mythology and Greek culture in general based on structuralism. DuBois, who refers to many leading figures of cultural philosophy as her direct source of inspiration, indicates that her primary affinity is with the Paris school of research on the culture of ancient Greece. Adhering to the ideas of Lévi-Strauss in a more (M. Detienne) or less (J.-P. Vernant, P. Vidal-Naquet) rigorous way, this group of scholars began to produce its own interpretation of Greek mythology from the 1960s on. The large group of scholars who have been influenced by this approach has distanced itself to some extent from Lévi-Straussian principles since then, or extended them under the influence of recent developments such as the orality debate.

The main features of this school characterize the two studies of the Amazon myth in question. The nature of myth is seen as the expression of and mediation between exclusively binary categories by which the human mind endeavours to create order in the chaos of life. The origin and deeper meaning of myth are thus situated in the human mind itself. Unlike psychologism, structuralism does not regard mythopoesis as a process that is supposed to lead to emotional stability, but as a form of thought. It is an intellectual activity, which is only distinguished from other forms of the development of knowledge by its specific nature. The major, universal mythical categories are the polar concepts culture/nature; man/woman; kin/non-kin; production/consumption. Each culture assigns them a particular meaning and combines them in semantic relations with numerous other pairs of concepts.

DuBois has connected the system of binary oppositions with two other approaches: the work of the philosopher J. Derrida and the latter's interpretations of the linguist F. de Saussure;[234] and the work of A.O. Lovejoy, whose *The Great Chain of Being* (1936) features in the subtitle of her monograph. The first of these sources of inspiration leads her to posit that Greek culture creates an identity in its myths to set itself off against its surroundings. Culture is expressed by the creation of difference, which is realized in all kinds of related ways. Humanity, as defined, for instance, by endogamy[235] in opposition to bestial promiscuity, is identified with being male and being Greek. Hence the myths take up a position against women (non-men), animals (non-humans) and barbarians (non-Greeks). The mythical representations express these oppositions in figures which occupy an intermediate position between the elementary oppositions: Amazons as men-women, Kentaurs as humans-animals. The struggle of Greek men against these groups—the Amazonomachy and the Kentauromachy—reveal the point of these representations, viz. the victory of one pole over the other. The opposition between Greeks and non-Greeks can be found in the barbarian character of the Amazons, stories like the myth of Medeia (a barbarian women who marries into the Greek world), and in the representation of the Persians as the ultimate non-Greek opponents.

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[234] DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons*, p. 20. In an earlier version of her inquiry, P. DuBois, "On Horse/Men, Amazons, and Endogamy", *Arethusa* 12, 1979, pp. 35–49 she was closer to Lévi-Strauss.

DuBois finds this theme in archaeological and literary material. She isolates a single major shift in the development of this mythical complex. In the archaic period, Greek reasoning still followed a model based on analogy. The oppositions which featured in philosophical and mythical discourse were regarded as polar alternatives.[236] In the fourth century, however, as can be seen in particular from the work of Aristoteles, these alternatives were replaced by the hierarchical princinciple of subordination. Women, animals and barbarians were no longer just different from the entity which could be defined as male, human and Greek—they were subordinate.[237] Of course, this change did not take place overnight. DuBois detects all kinds of symptoms at the end of the fifth century which indicate a growth of tension in the analogy model: the Peloponnesian War acted as a catalyst because it was an internal Greek affair;[238] and the tragedies of Euripides reveal the unbearable frictions which had arisen within the [polis] and [oikos].

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[235] DuBois opposes promiscuity not to monogamy but to endogamy, because she intends this concept to evoke the contrast between Greek and non-Greek as well.

[236] DuBois is here following the important study by Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy*, but since Lloyd himself was deliberately following Lévi-Strauss (see *Polarity and Analogy*, pp. 31ff.), the theoretical framework remains the same.

[237] DuBois is here following A.O. Lovejoy, since this would mark the beginning of the "Great Chain of Being", the model that links the highest divine power with the lowest creature in a single, hierarchical continuum.

[238] DuBois distinsguishes [stasis], internal strife, from [polemos], conflict with others. The dramatic change brought about by the Peloponnesian War

The focal point of DuBois' analysis is Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries, although she does refer briefly to earlier data, such as the world of Homeric epic, a few Pre-Socratics like Thales of Miletos, and the Heraklean Amazonomachy which is illustrated on archaic artefacts. She does not carry out a technical criticism of the sources she uses.[239] Her main interest lies in the explanatory power of the model that she has constructed on the basis of the writings of Lloyd, Lévi-Strauss, Vernant, Derrida and Lovejoy. Her conclusions can be summarized as follows. In the last resort, the group of myths that she selects has a single elementary structure: the relation between the binary oppositions referred to above, which arises from the construction of difference. The Amazons mean only one thing within this whole: they are men-women, exceptions to the distinction between man and woman and between endogamy and exogamy or promiscuity, and therefore doomed to succumb to the norm of the Greek male. There is only one historical change in this elementary structure: the shift from an analogic model to a hierarchical model, which takes place toward the end of the fifth century. The significance of the Amazon motif is not itself changed by this shift.

If we now turn to Tyrrell's work, he follows Lévi-Straussian principles the most strictly insofar as his interpretation is based on the exchange of marriage partners.[240] He takes the concept

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was that Greeks waged [polemos] against Greeks, while in the wake of these conflicts [stasis] became endemic to the Greek [poleis] (Du Bois is here following Thoukydides). DuBois sees the conflicts between the sexes in the [oikos] as a problem that is immediately connected with this [stasis], so that women are fundamentally involved in the war. For a different interpretation of this theme in Thoukydides, see T.E.J. Wiedemann, "[Elachistoon . . en tois arsesi kleos]: Thucydides, Women and the Limits of Rational Analysis", *G&R* 30, 1983, pp. 163–170.

[239] For instance, she sees no reason to go into the interpretive problems of the Tiryns shield, the earliest representation of an Amazonomachy (ca. 700 B.C.). See DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons*, pp. 53–54, and below, Ch. V.

[240] Lévi-Strauss' interpretation of mythology was originally derived from his interpretation of kinship structures, *Les structures élémentaires de la parenté*, Paris 1949; the fundamental binary opposition was supposed to lie in the dualism of two kin groups which exchanged female marriage partners. In his later writings, however, he came to regard the binary system as a universal form of thought, independent of the question of kinship.

of endogamy, which DuBois used in a rather loose fashion for marriage according to the rules within one's own group, as the exchange of women between groups of men; the men are not associated in terms of their biological descent, but by autochthony. This presentation is based directly on Lévi-Strauss' earlier work:

> Achilles kills Penthesileia—to discover someone he would marry. Heracles kills Hippolyte, and the girl who would be man is stripped of her illusions. Theseus rapes Antiope, socializing the virginity derived from the transitional boy. The masculine side of the Amazon androgyne is cut away, and the feminine side is ravished into submission.[241] The daughter must marry.[242]

The final sentence jars strangely with the preceding one, but it has the function of setting the whole passage within the context of marriage exchange.

Within this perspective, Tyrrell subsumes virtually every phenomenon to a binary model. Take weapons, for instance:

> In the language of the weapons code, then, the bow is ambivalent. It denotes a mode of fighting that is both beneath a Greek and terrifying to him—a suitable weapon for an Amazon, a woman yet a redoubtable foe.[243]

No doubt the bow is an ambivalent weapon, but it is even more ambivalent than Tyrrell's binary model suggests.[244] He emphasizes the world of Athenian representations even more than DuBois, as he regards the Amazon myth as an inversion of the norms of the Athenian [polis] and [oikos] structure. In a separate article[245] he has presented a detailed analysis of the Amazon way of life (what I refer to as Amazonology) as construed by serious Greek writers from the middle of the fifth century. This material is presented again in his monograph, described as an endless series of inversions of the Attic model. The matrilineal Amazons are an inversion of the patrilineal Greeks; they are pastoralists (horses) and plunderers (nomads) in opposition to the sedentary agricultural and trading community. In particular, the division between the sexes in Greece fits into a patriarchal structure in which men hold the initiative and enjoy superiority in power in all respects, while the matriarchal Amazons choose their own sexual partners and make the males in their society subordinate and passive. The Amazons are thus anti-Greeks; through the negative contrast, they confirm the dominant norms of Greek society.

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[241] These words have a vague psychoanalytic tone; in general, Tyrrell's text gives the impression of being based on a sort of common knowledge of the most diverse persuasions. Irrepressibly, C.G. Jung puts in an appearance, *Amazons*, pp. 70–71, even though Jung's views are by no means compatible with the tenets of structuralism.

[242] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, p. 93.

[243] Tyrrell, "Amazon Customs and Athenian Patriarchy", p. 1224 [= *Amazons*, p. 51].

[244] Tyrrell locates these connotations of the bow in the period of the Persian Wars, when the bow was a sign of a dangerous opponent, while in Homeric epic it was the coward's weapon, *Il.* IV, 242 and XI, 384–395. The context of these two passages, however, is more complicated than Tyrrell leads one to suppose. Besides, deities like Apollon and Artemis were archers; some of the leading Greek heroes in the siege of Troy, such as Teukros, were archers; and Odysseus himself proved his manliness and claims to mastery in an archery contest: these are all indications of a far more ambivalent and complicated background to this motif than Tyrrell suggests.

On the whole, Tyrrell regards the Amazon myth as an essentially Athenian myth. Although he cannot deny that the Amazons are mentioned in Homeric epic, he drops this without further ado when it comes to the "real" Amazon myth. The Amazonology ought to present him with chronological problems as well, since a large proportion of the testimonia date from the Hellenistic era, but he simply states:

> For later writers the question is one of fixing their sources in the classical period.[246]

More generally, his position is:

> If the present study were directed exclusively at the myth, *the chronological discrepancy would not be a problem.*[247]

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[245] Tyrrell, "Amazon Customs".

[246] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, p. 43.

[247] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, p. 41; emphasis added. When he tackles the chronological problem and claims that the entire myth dates from the classical period, he continues the above citation as follows: "But an attempt is being made here to locate the myth in the context of classical Athenian society, so the issue must be faced. Details were added at various times—the accretions of Pherecydes and Hellanicus are examples—but the general outlines of the myth, its themes, and its motifs, were established during the classical period [. . .]. Lysias's mythmaking [. . .] and Herodotus's account of the Sauromatians' Amazon ancestry [. . .] alone prove the case, *for they have been formed by reversing patriarchal customs.*", *Amazons*, p. 41; emphasis added. Once again, we are told that chronology is irrelevant to the study of mythology. Furthermore, the argument that Tyrrell's axiom—the Amazons are an inversion of patriarchal values—is correct because Lysias' and Herodotus' accounts *are* such an inversion is astonishingly circular. Equally surprising is the reference to Pherekydes

Here Tyrrell reveals himself as an extremely orthodox Lévi-Straussian in upholding the principle that the basic structure of a myth never changes. The correct interpretation of a myth requires one to compare every variant from every period, since "all the versions belong to the myth".[248] This ahistorical standpoint has repeatedly been criticized. The Paris school accepted Lévi-Strauss' thesis in principle, but in their more recent work its representatives have introduced certain modifications in an attempt to incorporate historical change and historical factors in the interpretation. Likewise, as we have seen, Du Bois posits both an unchanging meaning for the Amazons themselves, and a division into two periods as far as the meaning of the myth is concerned (hardly a historically nuanced view, but better than nothing). Tyrrell, however, is not even prepared to go this far; he asserts that there is simply one Amazon myth, which is determined by classical Athenian society, and that the rest is purely derivative. Given his premises, it is strange that he does not mention Lévi-Strauss anywhere in his study.

Tyrrell and DuBois both draw on the same sources of inspiration—Tyrrell too refers to a few publications by Vernant—but the results and conclusions of their work differ. Tyrrell detects a relatively important erotic component in the relation between Greeks and Amazons; he goes into the attraction of Penthesileia in detail,[249] and he has no doubt that the Amazons themselves were keen on having heterosexual sex.[250] DuBois, on the other hand, makes no mention of the theme of eroticism. Sexuality in her study coincides with marriage,[251] and when she describes it

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and Hellanikos as writing at "various times"; as fifth-century authors, they may both be firmly placed in the classical era.

[248] Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie Structurale*, p. 242.

[249] Based on Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica* (4th century A.D.) and regarded as a general characteristic of all Amazons; as we have seen, Tyrrell has no difficulty in treading on chronological ground with seven-league boots.

[250] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, pp. 78–80.

[251] This is also true of Tyrrell's study. He relates both the abduction of Antiope and Achilles' passion for Penthesileia to the framework of marriage without any qualms, *Amazons*, pp. 5 and 92 Antiope; p. 93 Penthesileia. Even when he falls back again on Quintus Smyrnaeus as a source for Achilles' legitimate desires (*Posthom.* I, 671–674), the notion of marriage is difficult to reconcile with the practices of the Amazons. Both Tyrrell and DuBois appear to regard sexuality and marriage as synonyms—an assumption which is no more applicable to ancient Greece than to anywhere else. Even if we confine ourselves to heterosexual practices, they were certainly not confined to expe-

with reference to female mythological figures she avoids mention of the Amazons. Conflicts on the division of functions in marriage and the [oikos] are illustrated from tragedies.[252]

There are also points of similarity between the two studies. Neither author has attempted to list and scrutinise the source material on which the interpretation is based. On the contrary, both monographs present a selection of material in accordance with a prior, overriding theoretical framework, and passages which are hard to square with their interpretation are ignored. The exclusive focus on the Athenian version from the classical period is a good illustration of this. DuBois does not even mention the story of Thalestris and Alexandros. The Amazon and Alexandros are presented as equals in the Greek stories, which raises problems for her basic oppositional model and is impossible to reconcile with the transition from opposition to hierarchy that she sketches. Tyrrell does refer to this story, singling out the beauty of the Amazon queen for special mention, but he does not resort to his inversion model in this context and gives the theme an essentially different twist. Following the Greek critics, he here for the first time raises the question of whether the Amazons were historical or not.[253] In this way, he skirts around the implications of the story of Thalestris: even though the inititiative to produce a progeny lies with the Amazon, thereby preserving the traditional motif that the Amazons wielded authority over themselves, the relation does not display any of the conflicts which Tyrrell claims to find in the classical erotic stories involving Greeks and Amazons.[254] The most striking omission is the neglect of the more ancient material. The role of the Amazons as heroines, which can be seen in the epic narratives and in the archaic archaeological record, is absent from their polar analyses.

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riences within marriage. The position of these authors is all the more strange if one bears in mind that the classic structuralist work by M. Detienne, *Les Jardins d'Adonis. La mythologie des aromates en Grèce*, Paris 1972, hinges on the difference between sexuality within marriage and "free love".

[252] Sophokles' *Women of Trachis* (Deianeira against Herakles, connected with the Kentaur motif) and Euripides' *Medeia* (non-Greek Medeia against Greek Iason). See DuBois, *Centaurs*, Chs. IV and V.

[253] His position in this regard is agnostic. He correctly relates the story of Thalestris to other stories of meetings between Alexandros and Amazons, *Amazons*, p. 24.

[254] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, pp. 24 and 54.

Had they paid more attention to this aspect, they could have given the historical development of the Amazon motif more shape.

Greeks and Others

The studies by DuBois and Tyrrell are connected with a new kind of research which has its origins in structuralism but has acquired a specific character of its own. This analysis of the "discourse on the Other", which was mentioned in connection with the *Amazones geographicae*, focuses on ethnography again, but in a radically different way from the Sauromatian or Hittite theses.

The difference between the two approaches hinges on the crucial question of how the ancient source material is to be interpreted. Does it present a more or less faithful picture of the people it purports to describe? Or should these texts be read primarily as documents which tell us more about the representational world of the Greeks themselves than about their non-Greek neighbours? The difference can best be illustrated by an example: the passage from Ephoros in which he connects the society of the Amazons with the Sauromatians. If we read this text as a document on the historical Sauromatians, the core of the myth can be taken to lie in this historical stratum. The same type of argument applies to other testimonia relating the Amazons to other peoples. The fact that a different people is indicated each time as the core of the myth is suspect, but it does not rule out the possibility that one of these choices might actually be the right one. However, before making a balanced judgement of this approach, we have to ask whether it ignores certain elements of the myth, and if so, what those elements are.

Since the modern ethnographic explanations are based on the Greek Amazonology, it is worthwhile to examine the composition of these stories. This involves investigating precisely how these Greek texts relate the Amazons to other non-Greek peoples whose existence is assured. The fact that the Greeks sometimes labelled the situation that they found among other peoples as [gunaikokratia] throws some light on Greek perceptions of those peoples, but it also distinguishes them from the Amazons, since traditionally the latter were a people consisting *exclusively* of women. Despite speculations from the classical period and later as to the role of men in this society, particularly in relation to reproduction, tradition had it that Amazon society did not include males.[255] This is the basis of the entire Amazonology, from Herodotos' Sauromatian story, in which the Amazons feature as an exclusively female people before joining men in the new culture, to Strabon's account of the traditions on the Amazons and the Gargarians. It is also to be found in a passage from Diodoros, which will serve the purpose of illustrating the problem in question.

Diodoros has two series of Amazon stories: the exuberant version which goes back to Dionysios Skythobrachion; and the version connected with the Skythians, whom Diodoros locates on the borders of India.[256] After a brief introduction on the growing influence of the Skythians, Diodoros refers to the Sauromatians who wrought havoc in the country of the Skythians. This was followed by a period of [anarchia], in which exceptionally strong women ruled. The women among these peoples were just as trained in the use of weapons as the men, and they were in no way inferior to them. This can be seen from the case of the queen of the Skythians, who defeated Kyros of Persia. Another example of female warriors is provided by the [ethnos] of the Amazons, which leads Diodoros to an excursus on the Amazons, even though his account may seem implausible [paradoxologia] or even impossible to corroborate [muthos].

There was a people who lived on the shore of the Thermodon that was ruled by women [gunaikokratoumenon].[257] This people beside the Thermodon, Diodoros relates, was ruled by women; women and men both engaged in waging war. There was one queen who was extremely strong and warlike. She assembled a special group of women to drill them and use them to subject the neighbouring peoples. After winning success after success, she was so proud of her achievements that she adopted the name Daughter of Ares. As for the men, they had to spin wool and engage in other domestic tasks which were usually performed by women. She drew up laws which reserved the practice of warmongering for women, and she humiliated the men and kept them in slavery. She had the arms and legs of baby boys mutilated so that they could not engage in combat, and she had the right breast of baby girls cauterized so that it would not get in their way. This is the etymology of the name [Amazones]. This queen also founded a city [polis], Themiskyra, and built a large palace there. She continued her policy of conquest until she met her heroic end in the glory of battle.

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[255] On exclusion and inclusion of males in the ethnic designator [Amazones], see below, Ch. II.

[256] Diod. II, 35; II, 44.

[257] Diod. II, 45–46.

At this point Diodoros continues with the history of the Amazons. Chronologically, Penthesileia is the last in a long line of brilliant, warlike Amazon queens. Following mythical tradition, he situates the theft of the girdle by Herakles before the intervention of the Amazons at Troy. Since the glorious days of the Amazons were set so far in the past, people believe that "when stories are told of their manliness [andreia], the old stories [archaiologias] of the Amazons are no more than [muthoi]".[258] The death of Penthesileia at the hands of Achilles hastened the decline of the Amazons. Her presence at Troy is explained by the accidental death of one of her relatives; this death in her own circle marks the beginning of the end.[259] The neighbouring peoples, embittered by their subjection, attacked the Amazons now that the latter were weakened and wiped out their existence and their reputation. All that is left of them is their name.[260]

To clarify this account, it is necessary to anticipate some of the findings of the present study. The Amazon myth initially consisted of no more than a brief motif. It began as an unknown female people about which nothing was known except the name: the Amazons. They featured in particular in the epic narratives on Troy, especially in the [aristeia] of queen Penthesileia and her death at the hands of Achilles. Subsequently, this Amazon people acquired additional elements intended to fill in and account for the gaps in the tradition. This Amazonology became a pseudo-realistic buttress to support the traditional myths. The problematic function of men acquired an important position in this construction. Some example of this process have already been mentioned, especially the etymologies.

Diodoros' account is an example of the full-blown Amazonology.

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[258] Diod. II, 46, 6.

[259] Diod. II, 46, 6; for the motif of this accidental death, see too Ch. IV below.

[260] Diod. II, 46, 5; [hooste mèd' onoma tou genous toon Amazonidoon apolipein]. [Amazonidoon] is an exclusively feminine term; see too Ch. II below.

He has assigned the Amazons a complete history, with a genealogy, growth and decline, introduced in his text by his account of the Sauromatians. The development of the Amazon state is constructed as follows. First there was a society ruled by women; this [gunaikokratia] and the related belligerence of the women were responsible for the later excesses. These excesses consisted of a complete reversal of the usual roles: women did men's work, while men did women's work and their bodies were physically adapted to this unnatural state of affairs. Some of the themes which Diodoros elaborates in this connection will already be familiar: gradations from the superiority of women to a complete subjection of men; the mutilation of limbs; the introduction of the Amazons to an ethnographic and chronological framework.

The historical development of the motif is reversed in the narrative time of Diodoros' text, which presents this construction of the Amazon myth in reverse. In his text, the Amazons *end up* as a warlike, exclusively feminine people, as nothing more than a name [onoma]. In the history of the motif, however, that is how they *begin*—as nothing more than a name and an epithet to indicate their martial nature.[261] Diodoros therefore reports the Amazons as a *separate category*, after and in addition to the Sauromatians.

What conclusions can we draw from this account with regard to the ethnological explanation? It seeks the origin of the myth among peoples who lived in a situation of [gunaikokratia], but this term always implies the presence of men to be ruled over. All the ethnographic examples, ancient and modern, are taken from peoples consisting of men and women. For instance, no one would deny that Sauromatian men existed; indeed, they are en essential element in Herodotos' account. There is thus a lacuna between what is to be explained—the Amazon people—and what is taken to explain it—a people consisting of both men and women. In the Greek versions the explicit presence of men in the story indicates that we are dealing with a case of an Amazonology. As we have already seen, the Amazonology cannot be found in written sources before the fifth century B.C.,[262] and a connection between Amazons and barbarians is attested in the archaeological evidence from the sixth century. As far as the modern versions are concerned, we are bound to observe that the question of why the Greeks turned these peoples into an exclusively female people—the mythopoetic factor—remains unanswered. The modern ethnological approach thus fails to answer the most important aspect of the Amazon myth—in fact, that which makes it a myth at all.

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[261] See below, Ch. II.

[262] The dating of the characterization of Penthesileia as of Thrakian [genos] cannot be determined, but a connection between this characterization and an Amazonology is not very likely. See below, Ch. III.

Some idea of the specificity of the Greek Amazon myth can be gained by comparison with other myths or fairy-tales about a people consisting exclusively of women. Such stories are universal.[263] It is only occasionally that we come across an adaptation of the Greek Amazon myth, as in *Bahram and the Amazon*, a Persian story which goes back to the Alexandros tradition.[264] Usually these stories are of an essentially different kind. For instance, the Chinese traditional tales of a Land of Women in the West, and of a Land or Island of Women to the East of China, are both primarily erotic stories and can in no way be related to the Greek traditions, despite the interesting parallels with the Amazons.[265] On the other hand, there are plenty of stories about groups of female soldiers, whether historical or not, but in each case it is a question of a group of women within a people which consists of both men and women.[266] Furthermore, there are individual cases of female warriors, but they are either members of a society consisting of men and women, such as the figure of Camilla in Roman tradition,[267] or they are not comparable with the Amazons because of their unique activity. A figure of the latter kind is Clorinda in Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalemme liberata*—a literary theme, incidentally, which is related to the Penthesileia tradition.

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[263] See e.g. Hennig, "Ueber die voraussichtlich völkerkundlichen Grundlagen"; Gerritsen, "De omgekeerde wereld van de Amazonen"; Samuel, *Amazonen*. Evaluation has not been simplified by Stith Thompson's decision to include many of these stories under the heading "Amazons" (F 565) in his *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature; a Classification of Narrative Elements in Folk-tales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Medieval Romances, Exampla, Fabliaux, Jest-books and Local Legends*, Bloomington 1932–1936, 6 vols. Many of these stories have no bearing on Amazons of the kind dealt with in the present study. This procedure does illustrate how in the twentieth century, just as in the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, even a scholar with Stith Thompson's experience still regarded the classical heritage as the standard for Western research on ethnology, mythology and folklore.

[264] V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes*, Liège 1892–1922, 12 vols. Vol. VIII, no. 22, pp. 54ff.

[265] The Western Land of Women includes men, but in a subordinate position. There are no men at all in the Eastern Land of Women. Women reproduce by means of magical water. In one story it is a supernatural spring, which impregnates women who look into it (in another version it impregnates women who enter it); their pregnancy lasts only five months, their children can walk after one hundred days, and they mature around the age of three or four years. Unlike the Amazons, however, these women are not warlike in either tradition. These stories are at any rate not earlier than the end of the third century B.C. I am indebted to E. Zürcher (Leiden) for his comments on these Chinese stories.

The Amazons in the Greek myths, on the other hand, are initially an exclusively female people; they are warriors; and they do not belong to Greek culture—the Amazons emerge *ex nihilo.* The only connection between the Amazons and the Greeks is the fact that they are known to the Greeks. This knowledge must have been extremely superficial. The earliest extant sources mention no more than the epic formula with the name of the Amazons and a reference to their warlike nature; the first representation of their combat (on an early archaic votive shield) matches the literary record. The development of the Amazon motif and the Amazonology reveals the attempts that were made to reinforce this connection and to expand the corpus of knowledge. In other words, the Amazons were initially a representation, a name, an image before they acquired a more solid position within the Greek imagination.

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[266] There are great differences in the function of such women. Fictional "Amazons" can function as a charter myth for male domination; see J. Bamberger, "The Myth of Matriarchy: Why Men Rule in Primitive Society", in M.Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, eds., *Woman, Culture and Society*, Stanford 1974 pp. 263–280; for the description of these warlike women in the South American "Amazon" region, see Samuel, *Amazonen*, pp. 169ff. and the literature referred to above in note 120 and 121. Indian tradition also contains references to such female warriors, but this theme has not been fully researched to date, and there is no immediate connection between this tradition and the Greek Amazon myth either. On the special role of female armies in Dahomey, for example, see H. D' Almeida-Topor, *Les Amazones. Une armée des femmes dans l'Afrique précoloniale*, Paris 1984. For Herotodotos' account of fights between girls in Libya (IV, 180), whom K.O. Müller referred to as Amazons, see Ribichini, "'Athena' Libica e le *Parthenoi* del Lago Tritonis (Her. IV, 180)". This ancient example was probably a rite of reversal. The areas where such rites are reported includes the Amazon region, see M. Bisillat (photographs), O. Villas-Boas and C. Villas-Boas, *Xingu. Tribal Territory*, London 1979. A case which may be of interest in connection with the ancient Amazon myth is a Hittite story about female warriors who operate in company with their male counterparts, F. Echevarria, "Déjà les Amazones. L'origine anatolienne d'un archetype constitutif des récits Amazoniens", *Hethitica* VIII, 1987, pp. 95–103.

[267] On Camilla, the heroine of Book XI of the *Aeneid*, see Th. Köves-Zulauf, "Camilla", *Gymnasium* 85, 1978, pp. 182–205 and 408–436; G. Arrigoni, *Camilla. Amazzone e sacerdotessa di Diana*, Milan 1982. Both scholars describe the gradual merging of the figure of Camilla with the post-Homeric story of Penthesileia.

While the ethnographic explanation of the Amazon myth turns out to be a duplication of the ancient Amazonology, the latest research focuses precisely on the worldview which produced this Amazonology. In his pioneering work in this respect, Pembroke[268] notes that it is impossible to distinguish in ancient reports on "matriarchal" peoples between reliable data, on the one hand, and the narrative character of the accounts themselves in the work of Herodotos and other ethnographers. Their perception of the world determines the structure of the narrative to such an extent that the meaning of the ethnographic data can only be analysed within this framework.[269] His investigations have been systematically continued by Rosellini and Saïd, who have presented an account of the worldview in Herodotos' work. Greek culture is at its centre, and the surrounding areas are arranged on a grid of increasing barbarism. These rings share the same structure in all directions (North, East, (South-)West), and are marked in terms of sexual identity and practices, death and burial, diet, and climate.[270] It thus becomes clear how Herodotos[271] and his ethnographic successors[272] have given form to their notion of the Other.[273] These present-day scholars are agreed that this ethnographic discourse is related to mythology, but that it not identical to mythology. One of the differences lies in the systematic transformation of mythic time into geographical, culturally defined space. This also indicates how much this line of research owes to structuralism. The analysis of the discourse of the Other is based on a programme of binary oppositions, but these are primarily interpreted as a system of inversions (reversals); instead of emphasising the elementary character of the oppositions, the focus is now on the creation of the difference between Self and Other, with Self serving to articulate the construction of the Other.

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[268] Pembroke, "Women in Charge".

[269] Pembroke, "Women in Charge", p. 35; see his remark on fossils, above, p. 99.

[270] Rosellini and Saïd, "Usages de femmes".

[271] The work of Herodotos occupies the central position in this investigation. For a detailed treatment of the discourse on the Other in this work, see Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote.*

[272] The account of the Amazons in Diodoros fits perfectly into the Herodotean framework. In Herodotos the Amazons were missing from the second geographical unit in the fixed triangle of Skythia, India and Libya (Asia was represented by Themiskyra instead); Diodoros completes the symmetry of the model.

[273] S.C. Humphreys describes the programme of this inquiry as follows: "1. How do people perceive other societies as structured systems? 2. How are such perceptions linked to social experience in one's own society? 3. What kind of general views about humanity are implied in such perceptions?" "Greeks and Others", in Humphreys, *The Family, Women and Death. Comparative Studies*, p. 51.

This approach results in a new understanding of the Greek development of the Amazon motif, which will be outlined in Part II of the present study. The close association of the Amazons with the Skythians and to a lesser extent with peoples in the South[274] provides this people with a clearly defined position in the discourse on the Other. In two more or less identical articles on the Amazons,[275] Carlier-Detienne has demonstrated that the imaginary society of the Amazons could be portrayed in two ways: as a society consisting exclusively of women; or as a society in which men performed the role of women. Both types are to be found in the Amazonology, and we have seen the different ways in which they have been handled by Herodotos and Diodoros.

Despite the emphasis on the systematic nature of this discourse, the Amazonology remains internally inconsistent. Even the procedure of inversion to which Tyrrell resorts time and again is anything but consistently present. Let us take the example of the story of the Gargarians as presented by Strabon. Although the uncertainty on the question of paternity can be seen as a reversal of Greek custom, in which the patrilineal relation between father and son was the norm, the distinction between the group of Amazons (women) and Gargarians (men with their own women, but available as sexual partners for the Amazons) has no inverted precedent in the Greek context. DuBois lays less stress on inversion than on the formulation of difference through the exclusion of the undesirable alternative as the main factor in the creation of the Amazons. This interpretation is not convincing in every respect:

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[274] See below, p. 419ff on the relation with Aithiopia.

[275] Carlier-Detienne, "Voyage en Amazonie Grecque"; and "Les Amazones font la guerre et l'amour", *L'Ethnographie* 76, 1980–1981, pp. 11–33.

the extent to which the Greeks tried to incorporate the Amazons in their worldview and to portray them as heroic warriors is difficult to reconcile fully with this view.[276] All in all, there is a plurality of patterns, and consistency should not be expected in the discourse on the Other. Nevertheless, all of these patterns have in common the fact that the Amazons are a female people who fight, and every imaginative fantasy which is added to this is a commentary on this single, fixed datum. This is the mythic element which has been incorporated and interpreted in the Amazonology.

The analysis of the discourse on the Other is in a better position than the traditional ethnographic interpretation when it comes to explaining why Greek tradition represented the Amazons as an exclusively female people.[277] The idea that Amazon society offered a picture of a historical matrilineal or even matriarchal society was not only incompatible with the elementary fact of the myth, but it also failed to take into account the way in which this image changed. Discourse analysis shows that this image of the Amazons forms part of a larger cultural and geographical worldview. However, like the traditional ethnographic approach, analysis of the discourse on the Other also runs up against difficulties when it comes to the temporal factor and the question of the gender of the Amazons. The Amazon motif itself is much older than the comparative or ethnological exercises on which all these interpretations are based. The Amazons were already known as a female warrior people before the ethnographic portrait of the Other achieved such prominence in the mental world of the Greeks. As a result of this traditional feature, the Amazons could be incorporated in ethnology, but we have seen that they always remained a separate category. Closer examination of the texts of Herodotos and Diodoros revealed that the Amazons were initially no more than a name and a reputation. It must therefore be granted that discourse analysis offers a splendid interpretation of the Amazonology, but that it rarely takes the pre-classical material into account, if at all. It is therefore characteristic in a number of respects that virtually all of these publications begin with the work of Herodotos and generally avoid the cultural history of the preceding periods.[278] As Rosellini and Saïd recognise, it is precisely in that older material that the origins of the myth are situated, and there is an essential difference between it and the discourse on the Other. Tyrrell's "solution" was to reintroduce the old idea of a Sauromatian origin. Is there a risk that the historicizing views of the Amazon myth may be reinstated in the prehistorical period? We have already noted that structural principles can result in an ahistorical approach, but here the principle is implicitly transformed into a disguising of the oldest versions of the motif. Where DuBois and Tyrrell pay any attention to the archaic material, their work implies that the Amazon motif was an unchanging datum in that period. DuBois' study of difference might also offer points of entry for the most ancient material, because the ethnological discourse had not (yet) become a compulsive framework at that time. However, since she immediately interprets difference as an opposition, she reinstates a fundamental homology between the archaic and the classical versions of the Amazon motif. Carlier-Detienne conscientiously states that she confines her attention to the late classical and Hellenistic material, but all the same she fails to detect any historical change in the theme within those limits. In fact, these scholars would have us believe that the structures which they detect in the Amazonology also formed the foundation of the epic versions.

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[276] For a brief interpretation of the Amazons in which these various aspects of the mythical female people are juxtaposed see L. Hardwick, "Ancient Amazons—Heroes, Outsiders or Women?", *G&R* 37, 1990, pp. 14–36.

[277] Homeric epic described the Amazons as "equivalent to men", an expression which does not exclude the presence of males in the [ethnos] of the Amazons. Aischylos, however, who was drawing on the epic image, explicitly referred to the Amazons as women "without men". See below, Ch. II.

In short, despite the merits of this kind of research for the Amazonology, it tends to cause the reader to ignore an important area of the Amazon motif—the very area on which the Amazon motif is based, viz. the stories about the battle between heroes and Amazons, the narrative traditions containing these stories, and the visual record of this combat. It is precisely because these representations formed a part of a very different discourse that it is only natural to suppose that the Amazons had a different meaning in them than in the ethnological interpretations. These stories did not concentrate on the fate of the children of the Amazons but on the aggressiveness of the Amazons themselves.

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[278] An exception in this respect is formed by Mason's various publications which trace the construction of the Other from Homeric epic (the Kyklops and the Amazons) via classical ethnographica to the so-called Plinian races and beyond.

Every approach to mythology applies its own interpretation to the material that has been transmitted to us from antiquity. H.S. Versnel has clearly demonstrated the extent to which functionalist, ritualist and structuralist approaches can result in completely different interpretations of mythical figures, mythical narratives or rituals.[279] It is questionable whether a single mythological approach is ever in a position to explain a myth in its totality, or even whether such a comprehensive explanation is desirable. Myths—and probably rituals too—can be regarded as literary texts which admit of a large number of interpretations and which invite every reader afresh to engage in the task of reinterpretation. Every tendency has its preferences, without excluding different views of the text.

The interpretations of the Amazon myth considered in this chapter provide first and foremost a history of reading. They indicate how students of mythology responded to the ancient material in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Naturally enough, there are both continuities and discontinuities over time. To begin with, it is striking that every school or scholar has selected a part of the Amazon myth and interpreted it as representative of the whole. Creuzer and Müller laid the greatest emphasis on the cult of Artemis in Ephesos, a theme which recurs in the hands of the ritualists. Klügmann opted for the image of a national saga: he assigned priority to the Attic versions of the heroic combat and interpreted the eponymous Amazon stories as expressions of national consciousness instead of relating them to a cultic context. The stories of combat, particularly those involving the Athenians, also received most attention from the psychologically-minded students of mythology. The old-style ethnologists concentrated mainly on the Amazonology and paid only sporadic attention to the cults, while the discourse analysts connected the Amazonology with the Attic stories of combat again. This preference for one or more aspects at the expense of others is fully in accordance with Versnel's presentation of the procedures of research on myth. In interpretations of the Amazons, however, it is possible to detect an essential shift of emphasis, which brings us back to the concepts introduced at the beginning of this chapter.

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[279] H.S. Versnel, "What is Sauce for the Goose", for differences between "myth and ritual" approaches; "Kronos and the Kronia" for interpretations based on different paradigms; and on the same question in relation to the Bona Dea festival in Rome and the Thesmophoria, "The Roman Festival for Bona Dea and the Greek Thesmophoria", all in Versnel, *Transition and Reversal.*

Creuzer and Müller both assigned the Amazons to the past; this characteristic was directly connected with their emphasis on the femininity of the Amazons and on their connections with cults. The etymologists and old-style ethnologists divided the Amazons into two camps: (unspecified) peoples consisting of men and Amazon-like women belonged to the past, while history contained the feminine Amazons—but the latter category dissolved completely, as did the question of the connection between past and history. Klügmann followed this construction by confining himself to the Amazons in Greek national history and ignoring the fact that they were women. As a result, the past, and with it the potential core of the myth relating to their femininity, remained problematical. Psychological and structural approaches, on the other hand, assigned pride of place to the femininity of the Amazons; Schultz Engle appealed to the past, Segal and the discourse analysts remained aloof from questions of history—either on principle, or from fear of contamination by representations of the past. Tyrrell fell back on the old ethnological approach and introduced an element of the past into his ahistorical interpretation.

The traditionally marginal position of the Amazons anchored this people in the past as long as the historicizing paradigm continued to dominate inquiry. This prevented the Amazons from being considered as figures of cultural history. Since cultural history coincided with the history of Greek territory, the Amazons were thus excluded from Greek history and from Greek territory. They stayed in this position until the fundamental destruction of the historicizing paradigm at the hands of structuralism.[280] Only now was it possible to regard the Amazons as a creation of Greek culture itself. The analyses by DuBois and Tyrrell, and more generally those of the discourse on the Other, concentrated on that part of the material which displayed this process of genesis in its clearest form: the Amazonology. DuBois' study diverges from this in some respects, as we have seen, but in essentials it is bears on the same period and the same chain of thought on which the Amazonology is based.

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[280] For this effect of structuralism on another branch of ancient historical inquiry, see my "De Homerische epen tussen oraliteit en schriftcultuur".

Almost every approach to myth has made a valuable contribution to the interpretation of the Amazon myth, despite the shortcomings listed above. All the same, the notion of a mythical core situated outside the mythical story itself is unacceptable. Such an assumption is based a priori on an original relation between the non-mythical core and the myth, while we are not in a position to determine this relation for all myths beforehand. Some myths are connected with a ritual, but the relation need not be one of ritual origin and mythical effect, nor vice versa, for that matter. Myths do not derive their meaning from something that they reflect, but they create their own meaning. The very fact that myths have always been classified as a special form of expression shows that they express themselves in a different way from other cultural forms. The core of the myth is thus situated in the myth itself—a word or a story. A myth by nature has a plot containing a beginning, middle and end. Moreover, not only does myth tolerate ambiguities which are generally unacceptable to consciousness, but it gives the impression of expressing the inconsistencies of a culture more than anything else. In this respect, it is of essential importance to take seriously the adage that culture consists of the ways in which the world is understood and interpreted in word and image. The main question in any theoretical discussion of myth is thus not that of the relation between the story and some non-linguistic core, but the possible difference of this type of story from other forms of narration and representation.[281]

To turn to the relation between myth and history, some Greek myths are a reaction to a historical event, but there is no need to regard them as the mythical consequences of a historical cause. On the contrary, myth assigns significance to the historical event; it is precisely in this way that the event becomes history. The interpretation of the war with the Persians within the framework of the Amazonomachy is an example of this kind. On the basis of the meaning attached to the Amazonomachy, the war with the Persians was reinterpreted as a heroic struggle. The Persians were not regarded primarily as "feminine"; on the contrary, the equivalence of opponents had an uplifting effect on the status of the Persians. However, such mythical reactions to historical events are relatively exceptional.

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[281] P. Veyne, *Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes? Essai sur l'imagination constituante*, Paris 1983, answers the question posed by the title of his essay in the affirmative. He argues that myths appeal directly to acceptance by their auditors precisely because they do not contain explicit indications of how they are to be understood or verified.

There is another use of the concept "historical" which I take to be crucial. Assuming that a myth forms part of the culture of a people, it is only natural that the meaning of the myth changes over time just as the culture itself changes. My use of the term "historical" is thus fundamentally different from its use in historicizing or structural approaches to myth. The historizicing approach regarded the core of the myth and the mythopoetic process as preceding history proper, and changes in the myth in the course of time were treated as secondary derivatives of its original, ultimately prehistoric core meaning. As for structural interpretations, although they address the historical period, they subordinate variations in the myth in the course of time to a core meaning which is taken to underlie the myth throughout the whole of cultural history. In the approach advocated in the present work, however, the concept of myth is set within cultural history, and changes, however gradual they may be, are taken to be fully inherent in the nature of myth. This rules out an unchanging, basic meaning to the myth. There is one aspect of the Amazons which remains constant: they are warriorlike women. However, the meaning attached to this aspect slowly but surely changed in the course of Greek cultural history.

Third, I would like to put forward another approach to the Amazons themselves. We have already seen to what extent the interpretations within the historicizing paradigm were determined by the symbolic function of the Amazons. Assuming the widely held opinion that men are the bearers of culture, it was impossible to see the feminine, autonomous Amazons as anything other than a marginal phenonemon outside culture. It took a good century and a half before structuralism was to break the hold of this view of the Amazons. Femininity certainly figures as an essential item in these interpretations, but it is antithetical on principle. This is an unsatisfactory premise, for the antithesis or even subordination of femininity to masculinity is not a given; it is a curious result. If it is taken as a principle, it becomes impossible to understand how this by no means self-evident position could become the norm. And since myths in particular possess a certain ambiguity vis-à-vis cultural norms, it is a fortiori not unreasonable to suppose that the Amazon myth itself might harbour this very ambiguity.

Despite the differences between them, the views of Creuzer and Müller have been connected with speculative systems to associate the Amazons very closely with the hypothesis of a matriarchy.[282] This association has been to the detriment of the Amazons among the circles of ancient historians, pace Rostovzeff. Similarly, the related Hittite thesis, which attempted to trace an ancient, prehistoric "Amazon" empire, met with little else than scepticism from other scholars. The attempt of radical feminist movements to bring about an "Umwertung aller Werte" by a rehabilitation of the Amazon fantasy as a feminist utopia has complicated the debate on this myth even further. It may be supposed that these associations may have contributed to the fact that specialists have avoided the Amazon myth as an object of study for a long time. Now that it is back in the limelight, there is a risk that the most ancient material will be neglected. Those who venture to inquire into the possible origins of the Amazon myth are faced with a sign reading: "Thin ice!"—the fear of contamination mentioned earlier.[283] Moreover, the oldest material is difficult to interpret because of its scarcity and disparity. Perhaps this is why it offers less resistance to the influential interpretations offered in the nineteenth century.

This archaic material occupies pride of place in the present study, which involves detecting traces of the Greek formation of the Amazon motif and discussion of the question of the origin of the myth. These archaic testimonies belong directly or indirectly to the world of epic, in which the Amazons are presented as women and as warriors. The combat with the Amazons has been toned down (Creuzer, Müller) or viewed as an extreme antithesis (Schultz Engle, structuralism) in previous research. However, the idea of the Amazons as heroines has a much more ambivalent character, as well as forming the basis of the myth, since all later adaptations of the motif draw on these data. It is therefore important to consider this heroic character of the Amazons.

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[282] For the development of this hypothesis, see my "Sexual Asymmetry. A Historiographical essay".

[283] Pembroke began his article "Women in Charge" by drawing a careful distinction between Bachofen's preoccupations and his own.

Mythological interpretations of the Amazon myth are generally based on the written sources, while archaeologists who have studied illustrations of Amazons have tended to confine their investigations to the material itself.[284] Klügmann and DuBois are exceptional to some extent, since their views were based on a comparison of written and visual material. This comparison is absolutely essential. Recent work by several archaeologists has made an explicit contribution to mythology on the basis of iconographical research. Even though philology and iconography are highly specialized disciplines, it is necessary to combine both types of material in order to understand the Greek myth of the Amazons. The cultural historical approach is therefore bound to relate the literary and the archaeological record to one another.

It should not be forgotten that the myths are recorded in specific genres. K.O. Müller devoted some attention to the narrative character of myths in his *Prolegomena*, where he noted that the myth converts abstractions into agents, and that the narrative transforms aspects of the mythical core into male and female figures who engage in human relations with one another. Klügmann and DuBois stressed the victory of the Greek male heroes over the Amazons and thus implicitly referred to the structure of a story of combat. Nevertheless, in most interpretations this narrative character is given a secondary role; structuralism is at odds with these narrative items because it analyses the structure within a variety of different myths and therefore cannot attach much importance to the narrative of a single myth. The preoccupation with the mythical core, whether understood in historical or psychical terms, leads to the treatment of the narrative as a derivative, or at any rate as a stratum which has to be stripped away. This rules out the possibility of considering the narrative itself as an essential component of the myth. On the other hand, it is common practice to indicate mythical elements in literary narratives, be they epic, tragedy or logography, and to investigate how the author of the text has handled this mythical element. This procedure is quite unobjectionable in itself, for a literary genre such as tragedy, which imposes its own norms on the form and presentation of the story, can certainly not be treated as equivalent to the myth. A similar distinction between ethnography or historiography and mythical tradition in the work of Herodotos has already been mentioned. Some scholars, such as G.S. Kirk, have thus wondered whether we really know the Greek myths; for strictly speaking we only have the elements of the myths which have undergone a literary process.[285] Ancient compilations of myths, such as the work of Apollodoros, are of little use, since they present a summary of mythical stories which have been changed, expanded, shortened and interpreted in the course of time. Reconstruction and analysis of the original myths, when possible at all, is thus a wide-ranging process, and in this connection the importance of the visual record should not be underrated either.[286] Analysis of the Amazon motif calls for an analysis of this kind. Source analysis reveals that the image of the Amazons was initially limited to a single item which could be included in a story. As opponents in an Amazonomachy, the Amazons were a motif which could be incorporated in myths dealing with others. The structure of the latter thus affected the processing and presentation of the Amazon motif.

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[284] Recent: E. Bielefeld, *Amazonomachia. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Motivwandlung in der antike Kunst*, Halle 1951; D. von Bothmer, *Amazons in Greek Art*, Oxford 1957; A. Bammer, "Amazonen und das Artemision von Ephesos", *RA* 1976, pp. 91–102; see also *LIMC* s.v. Amazones with references, and the later chapters of the present study.

Finally, the diversity of the Amazon stories should be mentioned. In the archaic period the motif acquired a function not only in epic tradition, but also in the eponymous stories of the Greek cities of Asia Minor. Klügmann was virtually the only scholar to recognise the importance of the latter stories in their own right, but in the last resort he still interpreted them in the same framework as the Attic stories of combat. Since these are different stories with a correspondingly different purport, however, they call for interpretation of a different kind. That is why the Amazons feature in them in a different form from that of the heroic stories, and the possibility of a link between the eponymous and the heroic Amazons cannot be established without ample research. For this reason, the eponymous stories will not be explored in the present work; I hope to deal with them elsewhere.

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[285] G.S. Kirk, *Myth, Its Meaning and Functions*; "Greek Mythology: Some new Perspectives", *JHS* 92, 1972, pp. 74–85; *Nature of Greek Myths*; see too P.J. Conradie, "The Literary Nature of Greek Myths; a Critical Discussion of G.S. Kirk's Views", *AClass* 20, 1977, pp. 49–58.

[286] See below, Ch. III.

PART TWO

Representations of the Amazon motif in archaic Greece

“For words, when opposed to such a blast of meaning, must give out, must be blown astray, and only by collecting in companies convey the meaning which each one separately is too weak to express. Connecting them in a rapid flight of the mind we know instantly what they mean, but could not decant that meaning afresh in any other words. There is an ambiguity which is the mark of the highest poetry; we cannot know exactly what it means.”

Virginia Woolf, “On not Knowing Greek”, in *Collected Essays*, vol. I, London, 1966, pp. 1–13; p. 7.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HOMERIC FORMULA

Archaic Amazons: the literary record

The documentation of the Amazon motif is extremely large and diverse. Chronologically, it spans the entire period of ancient culture from Homeros to late in the Byzantine period. As a myth, the motif has been incorporated in various literary genres, and images of the Amazons have been applied on all kinds of artefacts and in a variety of iconographical traditions.

The present study concentrates on the visual and textual sources from the archaic period, when the motif first acquired shape in Greek mythology. Unlike their counterparts in the classical and Hellenistic periods, these archaic Amazon motifs have not yet been the object of systematic research, despite their fundamental importance for the later versions. In addition, in any attempt to grasp the development of a myth, although it is often necessary to work with large units of time (decennia or centuries) because of gaps in the material, an essential aspect of the investigation is the registration and interpretation of its versions for each individual period.

It is common practice to distinguish between written and visual sources and to treat them separately. However, when the object of research is viewed as a whole, it soon becomes clear that these two kinds of sources are complementary. For example, while there is no extant literary tradition on the battle between Herakles and the Amazons before ca. 500 B.C., this theme occupies a remarkably large place within the visual arts. The procedure followed here has two stages: the first is to determine a corpus of archaic testimonia for each tradition on its own, since the classification and the more formal analysis have to take the different nature of these kinds of testimonia into account. Second, the relationships between these bodies of material will be treated for the more detailed interpretation of each of the different variants of the Amazon motif as a whole.

In the present chapter we concentrate on the literary record of the archaic period, since none of the documents in Mykenaian Greek appears to contain any reference to the Amazons.[1] If we confine our attention for the time being to texts which are written in post-Mykenaian Greek and may reasonably be supposed to have been written before the end of the sixth century B.C., there are three relevant genres: epic, lyric and prose.

The Amazons are mentioned a few times in extant epic. The Homeric *Iliad* contains two references to the [Amazones antianeirai], "Amazons equivalent to men". The first occurs in the Teichoscopy in book III, as Helene and Priamos, the king of Troy, are standing on the city wall and surveying the Achaian force. It is a critical moment in the war which has already lasted so many years: Menelaos and Paris are preparing for a duel to force a decision in the intolerable conflicts.[2] Helene has appeared on the wall and is welcomed by Priamos, who is sitting there among the other senior Trojans. The king addresses her with friendly words and asks her to identify the Greek heroes who can be seen in front of the wall. The first, conspicuous by his stature, is Agamemnon. Priamos breaks out in an outburst of admiration:

> O son of Atreus, blessed, child of fortune and favour,
> many are these beneath your sway, these sons of the Achaians.
> Once before this time I visited Phrygia of the vineyards.
> There I looked on the Phrygian men with their swarming horses,
> so many of them, the people of Otreus and godlike Mygdon,
> whose camp was spread at that time along the banks of Sangarios:
> and I myself, a helper in war, was marshalled among them
> on that day when the Amazon women came, men's equals.
> Yet even they [the Phrygians] were not so many as these glancing-eyed Achaians.
>
> (*Il.* III, 182–190)

Priamos is here relating an incident from the past. Its date is specified neither by Priamos nor by the narrator. A later scholiast responded to this vagueness by adding that the episode took place "when he was at the peak of his strength".[3] In view of Priamos' advanced age—his adult son Hektor is already the father of a young child, and Priamos is never involved in the fighting himself—we can date this confrontation with the Amazons almost two generations before the siege of Troy.

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[1] J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek,* Cambridge 1973/2.
[2] The motivation of the duel is given in III, 67ff.
[3] Schol. in Hom. *Il.* qu.voc. Didymi ad III, 188–189. According to this scholiast, the Amazons included Melanippe and Hippolyte.

The second reference to Amazons in the *Iliad* occurs in a dialogue between Glaukos and Diomedes on the field of battle. In an account of his ancestry, Glaukos, captain of the Lykians, tells the story of his grandfather, the hero Bellerophontes, who was sent on a mission which was to bring about his downfall.

> Then after he [the king of the Lykians] had been given his son-in-law's wicked symbols
> first he sent him [Bellerophontes] away with orders to kill the Chimaira
> none might approach; a thing of immortal make, not human,
> lion-fronted and snake behind, a goat in the middle,
> and snorting out the breath of the terrible flame of bright fire.
> He killed the Chimaira, obeying the portents of the immortals.
> Next after this he fought against the glorious Solymoi,
> and this he thought was the strongest battle with men that he entered;
> but third he slaughtered the Amazons, who are men's equals.
> Now as he came back the king spun another entangling
> treachery; for choosing the bravest men in wide Lykia
> he laid a trap, but these men never came home thereafter
> since all of them were killed by blameless Bellerophontes.
>
> (*Il.* VI, 178–190)

As in the incident involving Priamos, this episode too is situated in the narrative past. The heroic deeds of Bellerophontes are two generations away from the speaker. In both cases, then, the Amazons live on as a memory; the narrative perspective places them in the past.

Another tradition, which is not represented in the *Iliad*, gives the Amazon queen Penthesileia a prominent role; after the death of Hektor she appears on the scene as the opponent of Achilles. This episode was contained in the *Aithiopis*, an epic usually ascribed to Arktinos of Miletos, though it has also been attributed to Homeros.[4] The epic version is no longer extant, but its content has been preserved in a guide to literary history bearing the name of the philosopher Proclus (fifth century A.D.), which contains summaries of a number of epic narratives. The original poetic diction has been lost in the prose of this *Chrestomathia*, and in this respect this source lacks the richness of the *Iliad*. All the same, it does present us with an interesting Amazon story.

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[4] For discussion of these traditional dates, see e.g. G.S. Kirk, *The Songs of Homer*, Cambridge 1962, pp. 284ff.

> The previously mentioned work [the *Kypria*] is followed by the *Iliad* of Homeros, and then come the five books of the *Aithiopis* by Arktinos of Miletos, which deals with the following. The Amazon Penthesileia, a daughter of Ares, a Thrakian by [genos], comes to the help of the Trojans. Achilles kills her as she is acting like a hero [aristeousan], and the Trojans bury her. And Achilles kills Thersites because he has been abused and mocked by him for his alleged [eroos] for Penthesileia. A dispute arises among the Achaians over the killing of Thersites. After this Achilles sails for Lesbos, and after sacrificing to Apollo, Artemis and Leto he is purified of the killing by Odysseus. Memnon, the son of Eoos, comes to the help of the Trojans, with a panoply made by Hephaistos. Thetis tells her son about Memnon in advance. When battle is joined and Antilochos is killed by Memnon, Achilles kills Memnon. Eoos successfully requests immortality for him from Zeus. After routing the Trojans and pursuing them to the city, Achilles is killed by Paris and Apollo. A fierce struggle ensues over the body, Aias seizes it and removes it to the ships, while Odysseus holds the Trojans at bay. Then they bury Antilochos and lay out the corpse of Achilles. Thetis arrives with the Muses and her sisters and mourns her son. After this, Thetis seizes her son from the pyre and takes him to the island of Leukè. The Achaians erect a burial mound and hold games. A dispute arises between Odysseus and Aias over the weapons of Achilles.
>
> (*Chrestomathia* II, ed. Davies)

These passages, then, are the only direct and secure references to the Amazons in archaic epic. Nevertheless, certain other texts have been brought into connection with the Amazons. One of these is the mention of the grave of Myrine at the end of book II of the *Iliad* (811–814):

> Near the city but apart from it there is a steep hill
> in the plain by itself, so you pass one side or the other.
> This men call the Hill of the Thicket, but the immortal
> gods have named it the burial ground of much bounding Myrine.

However, although Myrine was later identified as an Amazon,

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[5] Including II, 814 (ed. Erbse, 1969); this long-standing tradition was sum-

there is no reference to this aspect in the passage from the *Iliad*, nor does her role match that of the other Amazons in the poem. She has been resting since time immemorial in a grave; the text does not tell us whether she was killed by a hero or not; and her name, probably connected with [muron], "scented oil",[6] is not immediately evocative of the field of battle.

Two hexameter fragments have also been included in the dossier on the epic Amazon tradition.[7] The first is a papyrus fragment which may have formed part of the *Catalogue of Women* attributed to Hesiodos:

> <she bore> Telephos, scion of Arkas, king of the Mysoi,
> <united> in love with the mighty Herakles
> <when> he went after the horses of proud Laomedon
> <the> best which were reared in the land of Asia
> of the <sons of Dardanos> }
> of the <daughters of the Amazons>} with great [thumos] he destroyed the race
> <and> expelled them from the whole country."
>
> (*FrHes* no. 165 M&W).[8]

The initial supplement at the beginning of line 12, [<Amazon>idoon megathumoon], however, has now been replaced by [<Dardan>/idoon megathumoon],[9] thereby making the Trojans Herakles' opponents instead of the Amazons. The passage is therefore the familiar account of the conflict between Herakles and the Trojans, where the Amazons would have been out of place.[10]

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marised by Strabon (XII, 8, 6 and XII, 3, 21, 1st century A.D.), turned into a novella by Dionysios Skythobrachion (2nd century B.C.), and paraphrased by Diodoros of Sicily (III, 54–55, 1st century B.C.). Compare also Eustathius' extensive commentary on this passage, ed. v.d. Valk, I, pp. 549–552.

[6] Probably derived from [muron], with the pre-Greek suffix [-in-] (long i) (personal communication, C.J. Ruijgh).

[7] For the most recent example see Tyrrell, *Amazons*, p. 2.

[8] The symbol <> is used here and throughout the present volume to indicate a supplement.

[9] [Megathumos], "with great [thumos]", is usually applied to males. Cf. J. Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, Leiden 1960, pp. 428–430, although the goddess Pallas Athena is called [megathumos] in *Od.* VIII, 520. Compare the application of the epithet [antianeira] both to the Amazons and to Pallas Athena.

[10] There was sometimes conflation of these Trojan battle scenes, as can be seen from an Amazonomachy by the Castellani painter, Florence no. 3773; Bothmer, *Amazons in Greek Art*, interprets this scene, II no. 19, as the Amazonomachy of Herakles, identifying the city defended by the Amazons as Themiskyra. However, in the period from which the vase dates, the second

The second fragment comes from a scholion on Pindaros (*Nem.* III, 64, ed. Drachmann). As can be seen from the role of Herakles' friend Telamon, this fragment too is concerned with a fight in which Herakles and his companions confront opponents who are unmistakably to be identified as Amazons.

> Telamon, insatiate for battle,
> first gave our comrades light
> when he killed the man-destructive [androleteira] blameless Melanippe,
> the sister of the queen with the golden girdle.

The epithet "with the golden girdle" indicates that the episode in question belongs to a story which is known from a later tradition, in which Herakles was sent to take the girdle of the Amazon queen. This became the ninth of his Twelve Labours, a cycle which probably took shape around the middle of the sixth century.[11] Nineteenth-century scholars often attributed this fragment to Hesiodos (fr. 278 Rzach), but it is now agreed that it must be a part of a different, unidentified narrative.[12] The Amazons are certainly one of the components of this episode, but the dating of the text is uncertain.[13]

Yet another text which has been connected with an archaic narrative featuring the Amazons is to be found in a passage from Pausanias (2nd century A.D.).[14]

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quarter of the sixth century, Themiskyra was probably not yet conceived as a settlement, and the idea that the Amazons lived in a city at all can be ruled out; see below, pp. 275–276. The fact that the city illustrated on the vase has three angular turrets makes it more probable that we should take it to be Troy. Tyrrell, *Amazons*, p. 2. uncritically accepts Bothmer's interpretation of the Castellani vase and the outdated supplement to the papyrus text.

[11] F. Brommer, *Herakles. Die zwölf Taten des Helden in antiker Kunst und Literatur*, Darmstadt 1972/2.

[12] Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, p. 144, "quelque *Heracléide* oubliée." Merkelbach and West do not include it in their edition of Hesiodic fragments.

[13] The conclusions which may be drawn from the position of the epithet in the third line [kteinas androleteiran amoomèton Melanippèn] are discussed at the end of the present chapter. J. Boardman, "Herakles, Theseus and Amazons", in D.C. Kurtz and B. Sparkes, eds, *The Eye of Greece. Studies in the Art of Athens*, Cambridge etc. 1982, pp. 1–28 has suggested that the story of Herakles' theft of the girdle did not originate before the end of the sixth century; in Chapter V of the present work additional arguments are adduced to support this conclusion. Without going into those arguments at this point, it may be stated that there is reason to place this text after the end of the sixth century.

[14] J. Neils, *The Youthful Deeds of Theseus*, Princeton 1980/Rome 1987 makes

> When you get into the city you come to the monument of the Amazon Antiope. Pindaros says she was carried off by Theseus and Peirithous, but Hagias of Troizen wrote in a poem about her that when Herakles was besieging Themiskyra on the Thermodon and was unable to reduce it, Antiope fell in love with his companion Theseus, and so betrayed it. That is the story Hagias tells in his poem, but the Athenian version is that at the coming of the Amazons Antiope was shot by Molpadia, and Molpadia was killed by Theseus. The Athenians also have a memorial to Molpadia.
>
> (I,2,i).

Since Hagias of Troizen was ascribed a part of the so-called epic cycle, the *Nostoi*,[15] that was probably recorded in writing at the beginning of the sixth century, it is often assumed that we are here dealing with an archaic narrative involving the Amazons. However, of the eleven extant testimonia of the *Nostoi*,[15] only one—the summary in Proclus' *Chrestomathia*—refers to Hagias of Troizen as the author, but this text does not bear the slightest trace of an Amazon story. The other fragments are connected with the *Nostoi*, but they refer neither to Hagias nor to the Amazons. And Pausanias, the only source who refers to both the Amazons and to Hagias, does not mention the *Nostoi*. In other words, a combination of all three elements—Hagias, the *Nostoi*, and the Amazons—is nowhere to be found.

Hagias is not mentioned as the possible author of the *Nostoi* earlier than the fourth century B.C.[16] Jacoby supposed that Pausanias' source must have been a Hellenistic author;[17] both Kinkel and Davies have included this passage as "fragmentum dubium"; and G.L. Huxley, who dates the *Nostoi* to around 570 B.C., finds the connection between the epic and Hagias curious.[18] All in all, there are various reasons to cast doubt on Hagias' alleged authorship of the *Nostoi*. Pausanias has linked

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use of this passage, with the attribution and date which I call into question here, in order to identify some uncertain representations, pp. 8 and 23–24.

[15] *Epicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, ed. G. Kinkel, Leipzig 1877, pp. 52–56; ed. M. Davies, Göttingen 1988, pp. 66–71.

[16] *RE*, s.v. Hagias (1) (Bethe). The problem is there described as that of a poem without a poet and a poet without a poem.

[17] Comm. ad *FGrHist* 606 F 1.

[18] G.L. Huxley, *Greek Epic Poetry from Eumelus to Panyassis*, London 1969, pp. 166–167.

the story about Themiskyra with the name of Hagias; none of the testimonia connects the *Nostoi* with an Amazon episode.

To sum up, it is very unlikely that the story of Herakles' siege of Themiskyra and the affair between Antiope and Theseus formed a part of the *Nostoi.* The only argument for supposing that this story belonged to archaic epic thus crumbles. The problem of which aspects of the relations between Herakles, Theseus and the Amazons did feature in the archaic narratives will have to be resumed on the basis of testimonia which unquestionably date from the period.

We can deal with lyric very briefly, for the Amazons are nowhere to be found in lyric poetry before the fifth century. Pindaros (518–438) certainly drew on ancient mythological traditions, but his work was primarily directed at the public of his day. The same applies to the tragedians. Although Aischylos appealed to older traditions for his *Prometheus Vinctus,*[19] and for his *Eumenides,*[20] both dating from the second quarter of the fifth century, the texts are evidently intended for a contemporary audience which was acquainted with current affairs. These works are instructive for the reception of more long-standing images within a new context, and it is the latter aspect which must be accorded precedence over the former. References to the Amazons in texts from the classical period should in the first instance be related to one another, taking into account the requirements of the work in which they are embedded, before any comparison with earlier versions of the myths can be attempted to determine whether the image of the Amazons in question is archaic or classical.

The same problems of dating recur when we turn to certain prose texts. The geographical work of Hekataios of Miletos (fl. ca. 500), the mythography of an author such as Pherekydes of Athens (fl. ca. 450), and the historiography of Herodotos (second half of the fifth century) most probably include orally transmitted narratives which go back at least to the previous century. This fact would justify us in treating at least a part of these narratives as belonging to the archaic material. However, the drawing of such a distinction is itself highly problematical; it is therefore preferable to treat these texts for the time being, by analogy with the other fifth-century literature, as fifth-century documents. This is certainly true in the case of Pherekydes and Herodotos, who wove these tales into a larger framework which embodied a personal, fifth-century perspective on the traditional narratives.[21]

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[19] On the location of the Amazons *PV* 721–728.

[20] *Eum.* 628; 685ff.; also *Suppl.* 287–289.

The position of Hekataios with respect to the classical authors is somewhat different. He can be situated on the border between the archaic and the classical period in terms of the material he adapted, his method—to the extent that one can be found—and the period in which he was writing.[22] His geographical work was probably written shortly before 500, and his historiography shortly after the turn of the century.[23] Little is known about his aims, except that he introduces his historiography with the famous remark on "the stories of the Greeks, which are both untrue and ridiculous" (*FGrHist* 1 F 1). His *Periodos Gès* (Circuit of the World), which is relevant here, gives the impression of having been designed as a convenient description of the surrounding regions and of the traditions in force there. The following fragments bearing on the Amazons have been preserved:

> Amazoneion. This was another name for Kyme, where the Amazons lived. Hekataios records the name in book IX of his work on the Aiolid.
>
> (*FGrHist* 1 F 226; Steph. Byz. s.v. Amazoneion).
>
> Themiskyra is a plain [pedion] which stretches from Chadisia to the Thermodon.
>
> (*FGrHist* 1 F 7a; Steph. Byz. s.v. Chadisia).
>
> Andron of Teos says that one of the Amazons, fleeing to the Pontos, married the king of that region, and because she drank too much wine she was called Sanapè (. . .). Since those with a liking for drink are called "sanapai" by the Thrakians, a dialect that the Amazons use too, the city was called Sanape, and later, by corruption, Sinope. The alcoholic Amazon left this city for Lytidas, as Hekataios (*FGrHist* 1 F 34) relates.
>
> (*FGrHist* 802 F 3).[24]

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[21] F. Jacoby, *Atthis. The Local Chronicles of Ancient Athens*, Oxford 1949; S. Bernadete, *Herodotean Inquiries*, The Hague 1969.

[22] L. Pearson, *Early Ionian Historians*, Oxford 1939; 1975^2, ch. II.

[23] F. Jacoby, "Hekataios (3)", in *RE*, VII, pp. 2670–2671.

[24] Lytidas remains unidentified. It is not clear where the text of Andron

We are here presented with three divergent items of information. The Amazons once lived in Kyme, after whom the city was named, or a part of it. There is no mention of Amazons in Themiskyra, which was regarded as the home of the Amazons by fifth-century writers. And they are associated by Hekataios with Sinope, where an Amazon credited with a peculiar lifestyle by Andron of Teos (fl. ca. 300 B.C.) was responsible for giving the city its name. In short, Hekataios displays the first signs of a remarkable tradition: the Amazons do not feature as the opponents of the heroes in a fatal combat, but they leave traces in the world of the living by conferring their name on a city. In other words, they appear as eponymous figures.[25]

From other testimonia, which for various reasons cannot be shown with certainty to reflect archaic material, we detect the contours of different versions of the Amazon myth. It is certain that a story of a conflict between Herakles and the Amazons was current, and indeed popular, in the archaic period. Although formal scrutiny of the fragments cited above did not reveal any reliable traces in the literary record, the archaeological material, at least Attic black-figure vase painting dating from ca. 575, shows the Heraklean Amazonomachy to be one of the most popular themes.[26] The identity of the hero is evident not only from his regular attributes, but in many cases also from inscriptions which make his identification certain.[27] Herakles always appears on these vases in his fight with the Amazons. No other scenes involving this hero and the Amazons, such as the theft of the girdle, are known from this period. At first Herakles is depicted as fighting in the company of Telamon and other companions; later he is portrayed on his own. As for the Amazons,

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stops and that of Hekataios starts. Jacoby (ad loc.) suspects that Hekataios only mentioned an Amazon in Sinope.

[25] For the eponymy of the cities of Asia Minor, see e.g. J.H.M. Strubbe, "Gründer kleinasiatischer Städte: Fiktion und Realität", *AncSoc* 14–17, 1984–1986, pp. 253-304.

[26] There are a few very early representations of a combat between Amazons and a male hero which date from ca. 700, but the identity of the hero in question is unclear. Though he has sometimes been identified as Herakles, such an interpretation is controversial. Discussion of the problem will be reserved for the final chapter.

[27] In this respect, the vase paintings can even be regarded as belonging to the *written* sources.

they form a group, large or small,[28] or they are represented by the Amazon queen as one of the combatants. In the large-scale representations, the victors and the vanquished are more or less evenly distributed among the two warring sides, while the main duel indicates what the result of the battle will be: the Amazon's knees give way beneath her as she is felled by the hero. This is also the usual pattern of other Amazonomachies whose identity is less secure. The popularity of the Heraklean Amazonomachy falls sharply with the commencement of red-figure vase painting (ca. 525), and fades out almost completely by the middle of the fifth century. By this time Theseus has supplanted Herakles in the Attic material.

The epic formula: [Amazones antianeirai]

After this survey of the sources, we return to look more closely at the epic formula: [Amazones antianeirai]. As we have seen, the earliest mention of the Amazons in Greek literature is in this formula, the only form in which the name [Amazones] occurs in the traditional diction.[29] The two hexameters in question are the following:

èmati tooi, hote t' èlthon **Amazones antianeirai**
(III, 189)

to triton au katepephnen **Amazonas antianeiras**
(VI, 186)

Each line ends with a combination of a proper name plus an epithet; in the first case they are in the nominative, in the second in the accusative. This indicates that the expression **Amazones antianeirai** may be a formula of the type which is very common in epic. Indeed, it was the frequency of this very combination of noun plus epithet with which Milman Parry began his analysis of formulaic diction.[30] Line III, 189 begins with a different kind of formula, "on the day that" [èmati tooi, hote]. Yet another combination precedes the conclusion of line VI, 186 with the Amazon formula.

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[28] Bothmer, who has described the iconography of the entire ancient Amazon material, concludes that the small-scene scenes of combat must be regarded as excerpts from the large-scale representations, *Amazons*, ch. III, p. 48.

[29] No conclusions about the original diction of the epic *Aithiopis* can be derived from the prose summary attributed to Proclus.

[30] M. Parry, *The Traditional Epithet in Homer*, Oxford 1971/2 (first edition Paris 1928).

In both cases the name of the Amazons is in the plural—the Amazons are a plurality, a people. There were two possible positions for the word [Amazones] in the hexameter: either at the end of the first foot, or after the obligatory caesura in the third foot:[31]

A má zo nes / / A má zo nes
- o o - o o - o o - o o - o o - -
I II III IV V VI
(1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12)

The first of these possibilities is primarily theoretical, since it is hardly ever encountered in practice.[32] In combination with the epithet [antianeirai], the word [Amazones] could preferably only occur after the caesura, since bridging the caesura, though not entirely ruled out, is avoided as much as possible. [Amazones] therefore occupies the natural position for a word of this shape (o - o o) in the hexameter. Moreover, the word needs an epithet to fill and round off the line (a line clausula); and vice versa, this line clausula also frequently entails a word division after the fourth foot:[33]

A ma zo nes An ti a nei rai
- o o - o o - o / o - o o - o o - -

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[31] R.S.P. Beekes, "The Structure of the Greek Hexameter: O'Neill Interpreted", *Glotta* 1971, pp. 1–10; in summary: "Word end is obligatory at 5/5 1/2; word end is desired at 8; word end is forbidden at 7 1/2; word end is avoided at 3 1/2 and long final syllable at 4; long final syllable is forbidden at 10 and strongly avoided at 8; word end is avoided at 11"; Beekes, "Structure", p. 2. On the structure of the hexameter see also G.S. Kirk, "Studies in Some Technical Aspects of Homeric Style", *YClS* 20, 1966, pp. 73–152, esp. I. "The Structure of the Homeric Hexameter", pp. 76–104; and M. Van Raalte, *Rhythm and Metre. Towards a Systematic Description of Greek Stichic Verse.* Diss. Leiden, 1986, pp. 70ff. These studies are based on the surveys drawn up by E.G. O'Neill, Jr. "The Localization of Metrical Word-Types in the Greek Hexameter. Homer, Hesiod and the Alexandrians", *YClS* 8, 1942, pp. 105–178.

[32] In 95.3% of the cases, words of the form (o - o o) are to be found in the position occupied by the word [Amazones] in the hexameter. In theory there is a third possibility, in which the trochaic caesura is bridged: - o o - o Amázones - / o o - o o - -, but this remains a purely theoretical possibility for the position of the word [Amazones].

[33] The two words [Amazones antianeirai] fill the second half of the line

The epithet which meets all these criteria, [antianeirai], is only found in this position.[34] Since [Amazones] is a plural, the only possibilities for [antianeirai] are as a plural at the end of the hexameter, in the nominative or accusative case. The use of the genitive is ruled out on metrical grounds,[35] and though the dative is a theoretical possibility, it is not attested.[36] Furthermore, the unique nature of the epithet [antianeirai] in the extant text in the sense of "equivalent to men" indicates that it is

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after the trochaic caesura, while internal word division corresponds to bucolic diairesis. See too Kirk, "Studies", 1966; Van Raalte, *Rhythm and Metre*, pp. 83f.; and on this terminology M. Edwards, "Homer and the Oral Tradition. The Formula. Part I", in *Oral Tradition*, 1986, pp. 176–230.

[34] Pindaros uses this adjective in the singular, *Ol.* XII, 15, where it is applied to [stasis]; the meaning is "a battle of man against man", which is not the same as its application to the Amazons (see below, p. 169ff). It is used in the singular by Colluthus Epicus (6th century A.D.) with reference to the goddess Pallas Athena (*Rape of Helen*, 170); here the use of the epithet conforms to its application to the Amazons: "equivalent to a man/men". Although this late epic was bound to observe the rules of the hexameter and made considerable use of the traditional diction, the technical difference in the production of oral and written poetry, as well as the combination of changes in language and mentality, imply that the usage of late epic cannot be treated in the same way as Homeric diction. On the metrical differences and similarities between ancient and Hellenistic epic, see Van Raalte, *Rhythm*, pp. 37ff, 52ff. In this respect it is important to note that, in the line in question, the epithet [antianeira] occupies the fourth and fifth feet, not the last: [Hèrèn kertomeousa kai antianeiran Athènèn]. It is more likely that Colluthus Epicus has derived the singular [antianeira] from the plural [antianeirai] attested for the epic tradition. The motivation may have been an episode recounted by Diodoros of Sicily (III, 71), in which Athena led the Amazons in battle, while Dionysos was in charge of a contingent of male warriors, including the Libyans, against Kronos. Athena would be a natural ally of the Amazons because of their common bravery in battle [andreia] and virginity [parthenia]. The word [antianeirai] is not used in this passage, but the context seems to suggest it. For another example of an innovatory use of [antianeira] in de singular, this time as a proper name, see below, n. 46.

[35] While a genitive of [antianeirai], viz. [antianeireoon], to be read with synizesis, would fit at the end of the hexameter, the corresponding [Amazonoon] cannot be accommodated within dactylic metre. A modified form, however, such as [Amazonidoon], derived from a nominative [Amazonides], would be a possibility, but this form is not attested for extant epic (see below, n. 40.

An alternative might be sought in an adjectival derivative [Amazonios]. However, the oldest example of this form is not very helpful. It occurs in the neuter used as a noun in the passage from Hekataios cited earlier in this chapter (*FGrHist* 1 F 226), but neither this example, nor the other testimonium—Paus. iii, 25, 3, where the epithet Amazonios is applied to Apollo—tells us anything about epic diction.

[36] The termination in [-èis] is very rare in Homeric verse.

a distinctive epithet: it can only be used of women, and in the extant epic material it is only applied to the Amazons.[37]

In his study of the construction of epic words, E. Risch gives the proper name [Amazones] only in the attested plural form.[38] He assigns it to the category of words with -n- stems, including proper names, especially ethnic designations, with a non-Greek origin.[39] His argument, in which he demonstrates why it is very unlikely that the ethnic designation [Amazones] should be of Greek origin, confirms the associative etymologies which have been suggested for the name [Amazones] since the end of the eighteenth century. However, the modern etymologies present a range of speculations on the original language of the ethnic designation outside the Greek linguistic area in an attempt to determine the nature of the Amazons as a people.

The testimonia concur with Risch in treating the name [Amazones] as an ethnic designation. Such words usually refer to a group of people, including men, women and children of both sexes. The plural form of ethnic designations in [-ones], such as [Murmidones], may also, without any further specification, refer exclusively to the males of the group. In the context of epic, where male contingents fight one another, it is usually the case that these ethnic designations refer to groups consisting entirely of males. In cases where an exclusively female reference is intended, Greek makes use of a different form of designation: the general ethnic designation is not sufficient, and either a word like "woman" [gunè] has to be added, or the name is used in a separate, feminine form. Thus besides [Amazones] the form [Amazonides] was developed, which refers exclusively to women.[40]

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[37] The only exception is the passage already cited from Colluthus Epicus, but see the discussion above, n. ?. Moreover, if the line from Colluthus is placed within its context, it appears that the speaker, Aphrodite, is trying to denigrate Athena in the eyes of Paris. Athena, in her bronze armour, flees from love and is attracted by the works of Ares; and the body of martial women like Athena, the goddess of love continues, is neither masculine nor feminine. These terms are borrowed from the characterisation of the Amazons, and Aphrodite is only following up the implications of this strategy when she makes use of the epithet [antianeira] for Athena. As we shall see, in archaic epic the epithet [antianeirai] had highly ambiguous connotations, and was evaluated ambivalently. This singular [antianeira] therefore deviates not only prosodically but also semantically from the archaic epic [antianeirai].

[38] E. Risch, *Wortbildung der homerischen Sprache*, Berlin/New York 1974/2, 24e.

[39] Risch, *Wortbildung*, 24e gives Myrmidones (plural), and Kalydoon and Apolloon (singular) as examples of such non-Greek names. Besides proper names of this kind, this category also includes a group of words of a highly specific character, such as parts of the body, names of birds, and technical terms.

Nevertheless, it is clear from the testimonia that the original form is [Amazones], unmistakably an ethnic designation of the type described above. As an ethnic designation, the name would therefore lend itself to being understood as referring to males.[41] This natural linguistic interpretation is reinforced by the context of the epic itself, where we are constantly presented with groups of males engaged in combat. The only reason to take [Amazones] to refer to women instead of men was the traditional and thus unquestionable fact that the [Amazones] were women. In other words, the traditional meaning of the word was at odds with the interpretation by analogy, since the latter would imply that [Amazones] referred to a group consisting partly or entirely of men.

Let us suppose for a moment that the gender of the Amazons was not fixed by tradition. In that case, the exclusively female character of the group would only be apparent from the semantic implications of the epithet [antianèr] and from the feminine termination of the plural form [antianeir**ai**]. Given the usual meaning of similar ethnic designations, and more generally masculine forms, ending in [-oon, pl. -ones], the word [Amazones] would be understood as a group of men, or as a people consisting of men and women, unless a feminine epithet were added. In short, the epithet required by the hexameter must indicate the female gender of the Amazons in some way, whether by its feminine termination, its semantic connotation or denotation, or both.[42]

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[40] The nominative [Amazonides] is not attested in the extant archaic epic texts ([Amazonidoon] in Hes. fr. 165, 12 M&W is a conjecture which no longer finds support, see above, p. 149). See e.g. Apoll. Rh. *Argon.* II, 385, 985 and 987 (gen. and dat. pl.); Eur. *Hipp.*, ed. Schwartz [Hupothesis Hippolutou] (gen. pl.), though in codices DEN [Amazonidoon] is replaced by [Amazonoon]; *Anth. Gr.* XVI, 92 (gen. sing.); Steph. Byz. s.v. [Amazones] (nom. sing.). See too B. Snell, ed. *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*, 1979, s.v. [Amaz(oon)]; Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, pp. 428–430.

[41] The singular of ethnic designations ending in [-oon]—such as [Murmidoon]—should be taken to be derived from the plural ending in [-ones]; Risch, *Wortbildung*, 24c. Here too, the primary referent is a male. This is not because words ending in [-oon] might be supposed to be male in gender as a general rule—which is not the case -, but because, in the case of ethnic designations ending in [-ones], the primary associations of the corresponding singular ending in [-oon] are with a male. In other words, the gender implications here are semantic, not grammatical. The masculine association in such ethnic designations may therefore affect both the concept of the Amazons as a people, and that of individual Amazons such as Penthesileia.

To turn from [Amazones] to [antianeirai], the first striking feature is the morphology of the word: a compound adjective, which ought to have a masculine ending in accordance with the general rules of epic grammar, is here given a specifically feminine termination.[43] How are we to account for this unusual form?

One possibility is that [antianeirai] originally functioned as a substantive, since the rule on terminations does not apply to composite nouns. Such forms are usually found as proper names (such as Iphigeneia, Andromache), but they may also be used as typical epithets, as in [Eoos èrigeneia].[44] These examples concern forms which were substantival in origin and are used in apposition, but they give the impression of adjectival epithets and come to be used as such in the course of time. There are formal parallels to [antianeira] in this apparently adjectival role in [bootianeira] and [kudianeira].[45] The latter epithets are necessary to satisfy the requirements of the metre, but they are not semantically essential; [kudianeira] is not even a distinctive epithet.

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[42] As we shall see, however, the Amazons are never assigned an epithet which characterises them as "typically female", although some of the proper names of individual Amazons are used in Greek culture to indicate "feminine" virtues. Technically, an epithet whose meaning was evidently feminine could have been used in the formula to make the gender of the Amazons clear, but that would apparently have been in conflict with the characterisation of the Amazons as a group.

[43] There is an equally striking formula [mèteres antienirioi] in a Hellenistic imprecation, see T. Drew-Bear, "Imprecations from Kourion", *BullAmSocPapyrologists* 1972, pp. 85–107 for text and critical commentary. The whole text is framed in Homeric language, and Drew-Bear therefore assumes that [mèteres antienirioi] is derived from [Amazones antianeirai]. In the text of the imprecation, the unusual female termination of [antianeirai] has been changed into the apparently correct masculine termination [antienirioi]; the correct masculine termination, however, would be *[antianores]. From this supposed correction we may assume that the imprecation betrays an awareness of the unusual feminine ending of [antianeirai].

[44] C.J. Ruijgh, "Le Mycénien et Homère", in A. Morpurgo Davies and Y. Duhoux, eds. *Linear B: a 1984 Survey*, Louvain-la-Neuve 1988, pp. 143–190. I am grateful to C.J. Ruijgh for his assistance in this formal analysis of [antianeirai].

[45] [bootianeira] "man-nourishing" is a *hapax legomenon* in I,155 [Phtièi bootianeirèi]; [kudianeira] "man-ennobling" is applied to [agorè] (I, 490) and [machè] (IV, 225). In these cases the substantive and epithet are separated from one another by one or more intervening words. All of these epithets occupy the same position as [antianeirai] at the end of the hexameter.

This comparison brings us to the alternative explanation: [antianeirai] was created as an adjective with a feminine termination modelled on the older substantival forms.[46] It is impossible to determine exactly how this process actually took place: either [antianeira] was originally—and probably very early—a substantive which later acquired an adjectival function; or it was created as an adjective by analogy with already existing female proper names as an additional instrument to make the gender of the Amazons explicit.

Either of these alternatives would explain the curious formation of [-aneirai]. Even if the epithet was originally created as a substantive, in the extant epic texts [antianeirai] only occurs as an epithet. Besides considering formal linguistic parallels, it is therefore also necessary to pay some attention to the functioning of [antianeirai] as an epithet within Homeric diction in the light of semantic parallels. The most obvious morphological and semantic analogy is the epithet [antitheos], "equivalent to the god(s)". Taking metrical equivalence into account as well, which is equally important for word use in oral poetry, this epithet provides only two comparable forms: the genitive singular [antitheoio] and the dative plural [antitheoisi(n)]. However, the epithet is not very common in these forms.[47]

It is striking that one of this limited number of instances of a metrically equivalent form of [antitheos] occurs only three lines before the mention of the Amazons in the Teichoscopy:

> entha idon pleistous Phrugas aneras aiolopoolous
> laous Otrēos kai Mugdonos **antitheoio**
> hoi rha tot' estratoònto par ochthas Sanggarioio

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[46] The name of the Amazon queen who is not interested in an ordinary man because her own maimed men are better lovers is Antianeira (Mimnermos fr. 21aW): a clear case of the use of [antianeira] as a substantive and proper name. In this case, however, it is more likely that the hypothetical process took place in the reverse direction, i.e. that this is a case of the later turning of the Homeric epithet into a substantive.

[47] Gen. sing.: III, 186; XXI, 595; vii, 146; xiv, 182. Dat. plur.: vi, 241 (noun and epithet at opposite ends of hexameter); XII, 408 = xvi, 421 (noun and epithet separated by one word). Snell, ed. *Lexikon des frühgriechisches Epos*, s.v. [antitheos]. According to Snell, compounds with [anti] belong to the relatively later expressions. In the case of [antitheos], it is taken to have replaced the older [isotheos]; see Snell, ed. *Lexikon*, ibidem., p. 935. However, [isotheos] originally began with a consonant (*FisFotheos), and was thus not prosodically equivalent to [antitheos]. It is impossible to determine the antiquity of [antitheos] in morphological terms.

kai gar egoon, epikouros eoon, meta toisin elechthèn,
èmati tooi, hote t'èlthon Amazones **antianeirai**;
all' oude hoi tosoi èsan, hosoi helikoopes Achaioi.

(III, 185–190)

The position of [antitheoio] reminds us of a fourth factor in the choice and formation of formulae besides morphology, metre and semantics—the principle of assonance by which the poet evokes a previous instance without lapsing into repetition.[48]

Alerted to the possibility of this echo principle, let us consider the Bellerophontes passage more closely:

Prooton men rha Chimairan amaimaketèn ekeleuse
pephnemen; hè d'ar'eèn **theion** genos oud' **anthroopoon**,
prosthe leoon, opithen de drakoon, messè de chimaira,
deinon apopneiousa puros menos aithomenoio.
kai tèn men **katepephne** theoon teraessi pithèsas.
Deuteron au Solumoisi machessato kudalimoisi.
kartistèn dè tèn ge machèn phato dumenai **androon**!
To triton au **katepephnen** Amazonas **antianeiras**.
Tooi d'ar anerchomenooi pukinon dolon allon huphaine:
krinas ek Lukias eureiès phootas aristous
heise lochon,—toi d' ou ti palin oikonde neonto;
pantas gar **katepephnen** amumoon Bellerophontès!"

(VI, 179–190)

The principle is less evidently at work here than in the passage from the Teichoscopy. Despite the absence of morphological or rhythmical echoes, however, we can still detect a certain degree of structuring, as indicated by the bold text. The hexameters cited here describe a series of three heroic feats. The first sentence begins with the signal "first" and concludes with the description of a creature that, far from being [antitheos] or [anthropoos], is divine [theion genos]. The second sentence, which begins with "second", is rounded off with the word "men" [androon]. The third begins with "third" and closes with "equivalent to men" [antianeirai]. Finally come the best male warriors [phootas aristous] of Lykia.[49] The whole passage acquires the character of a catalogue through the assonance of [pephnemen] and [katepephnen]—the latter word is used three times to describe Bellerophontes' actions. Moreover, the descriptions of the opponents of Bellerophontes follow a classification by categories: god, human being, man, and women who are equivalent to men.[50] Although the entire hexameter in which the Amazons are mentioned as the victims of Bellerophontes is self-contained and could be detached from its context without disrupting the rest, the term [Amazones antianeirai] is carefully embedded in a series of terms and assonances. The fact that the incorporation of the Amazon motif in the structure of this passage is based on the epithet [antianeirai] is yet further confirmation of the close association between the ethnic designation and the epithet in the formula.

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[48] Parry already devoted a lot of attention to discussion of this echo principle, *The Traditional Epithet in Homer*, pp. 68ff.

[49] On the difference between [phoos], [anthroopos] and [anèr] see below, p. 170. The potential of [anèr] for its notion of contrast is exploited in this Bellerophontes passage.

The connection between [antianeirai] and the preceding, metrically equivalent and semantically comparable [antitheoio], reinforced by the catalogue-like way in which a link is established between [antianeirai] and the other categories mentioned, can hardly be fortuitous. The influence exerted on linguistic usage by metrical correspondences and contextual associations is a well-known feature of oral poetry.[51] These findings make it plausible that the use of [antianeirai] has been influenced by the presence of [antitheoio]. There are two ways of considering this influence: either [antianeirai] has been *formed* on analogy with [antitheos] under the influence of the metrical equivalence of [antitheoio], lending support to the second theory of origin advanced above; or [antianeirai] has been *utilized*, independently of the formal origin of the word, under the influence of [antitheoio] (in the case of the Teichoscopy passage) or of terms which evoked associations with [antitheos] (in the case of the Bellerophontes passage). At any rate, the absence of [antitheoio] and [antitheoisi] in the diction of the Bellerophontes passage might lend support to the latter possibility, though it is to be hoped that more light will be thrown on the problem through a closer investigation of the chronological clues.

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[50] These categories can be subdivided even further: deity in the form of a divine and animal creature; men of two kinds, viz. the Solymoi as superhuman warriors and the Lykians as the best human warriors; and the [antianeirai] Amazons. Bellerophontes confronts every conceivable kind of "other" in his encounters. For a similar structuring of the heroic deeds of Herakles and Achilles, see below, p. 276ff.

[51] The influence of assonance, the choice of words and even whole passages can also be detected in oral prose. Cf. J. Vansina, "Memory and Oral Tradition", in Miller, J.C. (ed.) *The African Past Speaks*, Cambridge etc. 1980, pp. 262–279; J. Goody, *The Interface between the Written and the Oral*, Cambridge etc. 1987, pp. 86–95 even suggests that the term "formula" should not be defined in a strict sense, but that it should be understood as an expression resulting from context and association; cf. too the arguments advanced by A.T. Edwards, "KLEOS APHTHITON and Oral Theory", *CQ* 1988, pp. 25–30, discussed further below.

These considerations lead us to suppose that, in dealing with the formula [Amazones antianeirai], the epithet [antianeirai] deserves at least as much attention as the substantive [Amazones], especially since the use of the formula would seem to have been influenced by the context in which it appears. As we have seen, the repeated attempts to find a Greek etymology for [Amazones] have contradicted one another and have proved to be futile; moreover, in the light of Risch's investigations, it is highly probable that the origins of the word [Amazones] are not Greek at all. Given this situation, I would to advance the following considerations.[52]

First, if the word [Amazones] is derived from a non-Greek language, it has been adapted to the rules of Greek prosody, morphology and phonology as a result of the position of the formula. Meillet, Parry and others have demonstrated how the demands of formulaic epic composition encouraged the retention of archaisms and dialects and led to the creation of specific forms by means of the shortening or lengthening of vowels.[53] If the word [Amazones] has undergone such a metamorphosis, it is in theory an extremely precarious enterprise to attempt to distil the original, basic form from the word as it is found in Greek epic. On the basis of the extant form, it is impossible to deduce either the original vowels or the length of the original syllables with any certainty. Of course, the epic word [Amazones] will not have a purely arbitrary relation to the original word. The form which the word has assumed is not an easy one to place in the hexameter, and there is no reason to suppose that the prosody of [Amazones] has been completely adjusted for metrical reasons. In that case, it probably still contains some elements of its original form. On the other hand, the exemplary formation of the word in the desired position, with the even distribution of the proper name and the Greek epithet on either side of the bucolic diaeresis, offers food for thought. Has the non-Greek form of the ethnic designation been shaped to form the extant [Amazones] so that it coincides with the end of the fourth foot?

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[52] These considerations on the formation of the word [Amazones] are based on a number of conditions. The probable early date of the formula (see below, p. 185ff), combined with the fact that no ancient form of the word is known outside epic, suggests that [Amazones] was formed in the epic crucible. However, it is impossible to prove this. In the archaic period, the eponymous narratives show that the Amazons could also operate outside the epic material in a different role from that assigned to them by epic. Here too, however, it is impossible to determine whether this eponymous function has been detached in some way or other from the epic material, or whether this is a completely autonomous motif making use of the same figures, or even other figures with the same name as the epic Amazons. As will be seen in chapter V, the Amazonomachy is an unusual form of battle in the canon of Herakles, so that (Trojan) epic is the most likely candidate for the first version of the Amazon motif.

[53] Syllable length is the crucial factor determining the position of Greek words in the hexameter; accents are subordinate. Since the spoken Greek of the day did not lend itself for easy insertion in the hexameter, epic diction developed certain peculiarities: archaisms, vowel lengthening, a combination of various dialects, etc. This practice made epic Greek a recognisable artificial language for every member of the audience. See too Ruijgh, "Le Mycénien

In short, it is impossible to deduce the nature and the extent of the modification from the extant diction. Hence the original phonology and morphology of the word remain extremely uncertain. The numerous, widely divergent modern attempts to arrive at this original form of the word through etymology illustrate the pointlessness of the enterprise. We do not know from which language the word [Amazones] or the stem [Amasd-] are derived; and we do not even know for sure what phonology and morphology the word is supposed to have had in that language. Did it already have an [a-], or is the initial [a] merely a duplication of the second? If the word is a compound, did it begin with [a-], [am-] or [ama-]?[54] What was the length or accent of

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et Homère", passim; cf. M. Parry, *Homeric Formulae and Homeric Metre*, 1928/1971,2, pp. 197ff.; W.F. Wyatt, *Metrical Lengthening in Homer*, 1969.

[54] Pape-Benseler, *Wörterbuch der Griechischen Eigennamen*, Braunschweig 1911/1959: "Am-aza", "strong mother"; W. Prellwitz, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der Griechische Sprache*, Göttingen 1905: "Ama-jani", "ruling woman" (Skythian); Lagercrantz, *Xenia Lidéniana*: "hamazan", "female warrior", from "*maz" "to fight" (Persian); Urusadze, "Zur Herkunft des Amazonen-Namens": "amßzß" from "mßzß", "boy" (Ubych). Bonfante, "Il nome dell' Amàzzoni", expands on the argument of H. Jacobsohn, *KZ* 54, 1927, p. 278 ff. "a-mang-yo" "without men" by lengthening the short vowel on the basis of the following heavy "z"; just as in Illyrian! Hemmerdinger, "L'étymologie d'[Amazones]", traces it to Persian "hemeh zen"(= "all women"), based on (h)amazon.

the original syllables? In other words, once it is assumed that the form of the Greek word [Amazones] has its origins in epic diction, one has to take fully into account the theoretical problems which this derivation from Greek epic entails.

Second, as we have seen, the word [Amazones] corresponds morphologically to other ethnic designations: their use in the plural designates a people which consists, at least partly, of males. If a definite article is added to the ethnic designation— which is not the case in the Homeric epics—it is the masculine plural, such as [**hoi** Hellènes]. The fact that this word combination can refer to an entity comprising men, women and children is due to its culturally determined meaning; the composition of the group is not reflected in the grammatical form. In this respect, the relation of the ethnic designation to the referent is an arbitrary one. That the men are regarded as the most significant members of the people is also evident from the specific feminine form which ethnic designations require for the designation of women alone. This representation of women and men in an ethnic designation is a general rule, which is why the meaning of the ethnic designation can be termed culturally determined.

The predominance of masculine associations in ethnic designations without any further specifications has an obvious function in epic, where ethnic designations generally refer to contingents of males engaged in battle.[55] When the ethnic designation is used in such a context, there is no need for any further specification to make it clear that it refers exclusively to males. In the case of the Amazons, however, a discrepancy arises. The proper name [Amazones] corresponds to the usual plural form of these ethnic designations, but the word turns out to be used as a feminine plural; the grammatical effects can be seen in the form of the epithet [antianeirai]. Once again, this is the result of the traditionally determined meaning: the noun [Amazones], which would normally be interpreted as referring either to men alone, or to men and women, here refers exclusively to women. The usual value of the ethnic designation— predominantly masculine in semantic terms and exclusively masculine in grammatical terms—has been adapted to the semantic value in the special case of the [Amazones]. The semantic value of the sign is here an independent factor, as it were, which exerts its influence autonomously, instead of being determined by the combination of *signifiant* and *signifié*. The ethnic designation [Amazones] is thus distinguished from other ethnic designations on the basis of the traditional, extra-linguistic meaning, which subsequently also confers on the noun a certain linguistic ambiguity. Moreover, since the Amazons in fact feature in the epic as a contingent, the expectation that this is a group of males is reinforced—only to be violently contradicted.

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[55] To illustrate, the ethnic designation [Trooes] follows this rule, even though Trojan women belong to this group in the story, while there are no women present on the Achaian side, apart from those who have been captured (and are therefore not Achaian). [Trooes] is applied both to the Trojans on the battle-field and to the entire Trojan people. The Trojan women are called [Trooiades], e.g. VI 442, and even [Trooiai] (literally "women belonging to Troy"), e.g. III, 384. C. Patterson, "*Hai Attikai*; The Other Athenians", in Skinner, *Rescuing Creusa*, pp. 49–68, discusses this terminology regarding men and women from Attika and Athens, though she focuses on its relation to citizenship rather than on the representation of ethnic designations as such.

As far as one can tell from the history of the sign [Amazones], it has always had this anomalous character. Without an awareness of the tradition or without the feminine epithet [antianeirai], there was no way of telling that this was a people of *female* warriors. It is even possible that some Greeks were thrown into confusion by the ethnic designation [Amazones] and the expectations that it raised. The creation of the form [Amazonides]—the unmistakably feminine form of [Amazones]—was entirely redundant as far as the meaning of this noun was concerned. It is possible that not only metrical demands[56] but also a desire to render the ethnic designation explicit played a part in the creation of this form. At any rate, it is striking that the adaptation of the original name to Greek resulted in a proper noun which at first sight is riddled with ambiguity, instead of a form with an immediate exclusively feminine referent, such as the groups of mythical women like [Nymphai][57] and [Charites].

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[56] See above, n. blocks.

[57] Associations of the Amazons with the Nymphs are attested in later texts, e.g. Pherekydes (*FGrHist* 3, F 15a–c; in Apoll. Rh. II, 990), who refers to their mother as the Naiad Harmonia; and in the names of Amazons which recall the Nymphs, such as Myrine (*Il.* II, 814) and Myrte, who was mentioned as the mother of Myrtilos, the servant of Oinomaos, whose father was Hermes (Apoll. Rh. I, 752). There are late-classical representations of (series of) dancing Amazons who recall Nymphs from Eastern and Western

Finally, it should be emphasised that an ethnic designation, like any other sign, functions in a coherent system of signs; the sign derives its meaning from its analogy with and difference from other signs. The (masculine) plural form of the sign "ethnic designation" refers not only to males, but also— though less explicitly—to females. [Amazones] differs from the other ethnic designations in this respect, but it remains analogous to them; this affinity is confirmed by the formal *signifiant*, the plural which has strong masculine connotations in ethnic designations. Consequently, the notion "men" is implied in the *signifié* of the sign [Amazones]. Although the tradition is perfectly clear that the [Amazones] were exclusively women, a fact which is confirmed by the grammatical value of the word, the *signifiant* inevitably still bears the connotation of "men" and "masculinity". As we have seen, the context of the epic contributes significantly to this process.

The fact that the ethnic designations [Amazon] and [Amazones] formally still refer to "men" is in fact barely taken into account in the Greek Amazonology. The traditional semantic (and therefore grammatical) "femininity" continued to determine the image of the Amazons at the level of explicit cultural assumptions.[58] Given the unquestioned nature of this assumption, the issue of the sexual nature and composition of the Amazon people continued to be the subject of extensive discussion and was dealt with in a great variety of ways.[59] Late classical speculations on the role of men among the Amazons, particularly in relation to procreation, clearly have a character and context of their own.[60] This is obvious enough from the projection of the existence of men *beside* the Amazons. For example, when Herodotos refers to people who do not recognise the difference of gender as such—thus where masculinity is incorporated *in* women and femininity

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Greece, but not from the mainland. Cf. G. Schneider-Hermann, "The Dance of the Amazons", in *Studies in Honour of Arthur Dale Trendall*, Sydney 1979, pp. 171–175.

[58] The only exception that I have been able to find in the Greek testimonia is that of Palaiphatos, see above, p. 30.

[59] The modern interpreters have drawn conclusions of a different kind from this debate. H. Krause was the only one to consider the gender of the word [Amazones] in his analysis of the question of origins, see above, p. 32.

[60] See the extensive discussion in Tyrrell, "Amazon Customs and Athenian Patriarchy", and Carlier-Detienne, "Voyage en Amazonie Grecque".

in men—he is certainly not referring to the Amazons, but to human groups which are literally and figuratively far removed from the norm of gender difference.[61] The Amazonology is therefore an interpretation of the fact that the Amazons themselves were women. This does not therefore have any immediate connection with the essential and original ambiguity resulting from the tension between the morphology and the semantic tradition of the word [Amazones].

To sum up, the notions of "men" and "masculinity" remained in evidence behind the *signifiant* [Amazones]. At the level of the traditional cultural image of the Amazons, however, and in explicit linguistic usage, men were excluded from that picture.[62] The cultural meaning and the grammatical femininity of [Amazones] make it perfectly clear that the term "Amazon" excludes the term "man". All the same, this process of exclusion is unable to remove the implicit term "man" from the scene entirely.[63] This ambiguity is so crucial to the mythical image that we are bound to investigate certain aspects of it in more detail.

The meanings of [antianeirai]

At this point we can turn from consideration of the ethnic designation [Amazones] to examine the epithet [antianeirai] more closely. This epithet is derived from *[antianeryai] and is composed of the following elements: the prefix [anti]; [anèr], to which the prefix is applied; the feminine [(y)a]; and the nominative plural termination in [i]. In combination with the substantive [Amazones], this epithet proves to evoke a wide variety of connotations.

The prefix [anti] is never used in the sense of "(fighting) against" in epic diction.[64] The figurative use "equivalent to" is based on the image of a pair of scales in equilibrium: what lies on one side is "against" [anti] what lies on the other side, and is thus equivalent. The local sense of [anti] as "opposite" is not found in Homeric epic. The closest English equivalent is thus "equivalent to". Things are [anti] one another if one is equivalent to the other, such as exchange, revenge, penalty. People are [anti] one another if they can be regarded as equals.[65]

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[61] E.g. [Enarees androgunoi], Hdt. IV, 67; see too Rossellini and Saïd, "Usages de femmes", p. 1002 for the connection between this aspect of this people and other features which were attributed to non-Greeks. It should be stressed that Herodotos' treatment does not coincide with the mythical image, but is an interpretation of it.

[62] In the terminology of J. Derrida, they are the supplement to the Amazons; see e.g. J. Derrida, *De la Grammatologie*, Paris 1967, pp. 203ff.

[63] This phenomenon is overlooked by those, like DuBois and Tyrrell, who immediately break down the ambiguous sign [Amazones] into the oppositions "male" and "female".

[64] Snell, *Lexikon*, s.v. [anti].

[Anèr] can be used neutrally (in so far as there is such a thing as neutrality in an androcentric world). It means "human being", corresponding to [phoos] or [anthroopos]. In certain contexts, however, [anèr] may acquire a specific contrastive value.[66] In that case, "man" is opposed to "woman", "human being" is contrasted to "animal" or "deity", or adult is contrasted to child.

There are various possibilities within the specific opposition between "man" and "woman". If the notion of "woman" is explicitly indicated, for example by the use of the word "woman" [gunè], a feminine proper name or the mention of female figures such as "mother" or "sister", [anèr] acquires the meaning of "male". The emphasis is on the physical distinction between the sexes and on the relations between the sexes which arise on that basis, such as kinship and sexuality. If the notion of "woman" is not explicitly indicated but is implied by the context or introduced by another word,[67] [anèr] acquires a more qualitative significance, referring to "masculinity" in the sense of masculine characteristics which women are not assumed to possess as such—courage, resilience, determination, moderation. The *Lexikon* describes this aspect of [anèr] as "männliches Wesen im vorgestellten Gegensatz zu weiblichen Wesen".[68] This qualitative meaning of [anèr] is closely connected with the responsibilities which men bear in the epic world, of which the principal is waging war. The *Lexikon* aptly refers to a "vorgestellten Gegensatz", for as a rule epic—and Greek mentality in general—represents masculinity and femininity as mutually exclusive characteristics. Upon closer inspection, however, this representation proves to be an ideal way of looking at things. Behind this notion of the difference between the sexes as an opposition, one can detect a view of humanity in which the distinction between masculinity and femininity is a gradual one; the two qualities are thus the extreme poles of a sliding scale, so that demarcation is in theory impossible and requires explicit ratification every time it occurs.[69]

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[65] The meaning of [anti] in proper names is often unclear, as in the name Antiope, which is also known as an Amazon name, Snell, *Lexikon*, s.v. [anti].

[66] Snell, *Lexikon*, s.v. [anèr]; with contrastive value in almost 25% of all cases.

[67] E.g. in [Achaiides ouket' Achaioi], *Il.* II, 235.

[68] Snell, *Lexikon*, s.v. [anèr], p. 830.

As a contrastive term, [anèr] thus evokes the image of two sexes. On the first interpretation, the sexual code, the difference between the sexes is indicated which can link them together in a relation. The second interpretation underlines the difference by constructing an essential distinction between the sexes; this distinction motivates and sustains the difference in social functions. The characteristics of men and women and the social spheres in which they are expected to operate are not supposed to demonstrate any points of contact or similarity.

If we now return to the formula [Amazones antianeirai], there is formally nothing in the initial elements [Amazones]—an ethnic group consisting of men and possibly women too—, [anti]—"equivalent to" -,[70] or [anèr]—in the neutral sense— which might lead one to suppose that those designated are not men. Yet the conjunction of [anti] and [anèr] serves as a kind of hinge to introduce an alternative, since this combination is bound to give [anèr] a contrastive meaning. After all, that which is equivalent to something else is by definition different from that something. The relation presupposes the essential difference, which only recedes into the background at the point of comparison. One might compare the use of the epithet [isotheos], "equal to a deity", which temporarily obviates the essential difference between humans and deities, while [antitheos], "equivalent to a deity", temporarily obviates the difference in effect between humans and deities. All the same, both epithets leave the distinction between deities and humans intact; it is only suspended at the moment of comparison.

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[69] Cf. J.J. Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire. The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece*, New York/London 1990, ch. 1; p. 159: "the society for which and in which the *Odyssey* is composed lives with certain lies or fictions— one of the principal social lies is that women and men, whose work does not overlap, are really as different as their social spheres (. . . .). Social propriety is both a moral requirement and a manipulable facade." For the impact of this cultural paradox on the meaning of the Amazons, see the further discussion in Ch. III.

[70] Cf. Pindaros' application of [antianeira] to [stasis] (*Ol.* XII, 15); strife between man and man.

The alternative hinted at by the combination of [anti] and [anèr] is fully explicit at the end of the formula: the feminine ending in [-ai] makes it clear that these [Amazones] are women, not men. Thus, in reading the formula [Amazones antianeirai] from left to right, there is nothing to undermine a masculine reading of [Amazones]; by the time one has reached the feminine termination, however, only a feminine reading is permissible: either these warriors are all female, or the whole people consists exclusively of women.[71]

The formula thus displays a rapid succession as it moves from "male" to "female". Assuming a masculine context, the word [Amazones] is taken to refer to males. *The first sign of doubt arises at the word [anèr], for, given the contrastive function of [anti], it is here that the "masculinity" of the [Amazones], or of [anèr] itself, is called into question.* Finally, the grammatically unambiguous termination in [-ai] indicates that what could have been taken to be a male contingent of Amazons is in fact a group of women.[72] However, this solution of the dilemma has repercussions on the Amazons through the effects of [anti]: they are indeed women who are equivalent to men in combat. "Masculinity", which was latent in the word [Amazones], is here momentarily made visible as a reflection of [anèr] in the formula.

At the very moment when they are revealed as women, however, the Amazons also recall the difference between the sexes. [Amazones], which has been feminised by the feminine termination of the epithet and defined as having an explicitly feminine referent, is now given a contrastive sexual connotation in opposition to [andres] by means of the intervention of [antianèr]. No longer opponents in battle, they become potential sexual partners.

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[71] Both possibilities are explored in the tradition. The literary record up to the fifth century presents the picture of a completely female people, who also engage in battle; see e.g. below. Herodotos' story about the Sauromates (IV, 110–117) fulfils a kind of bridge function: the Skythian men are first "foreigners" among another people, only to become incorporated as the men who belong to the Amazons. Ephoros (ad Steph. Byz. s.v. Amazones) is the first known source to present the Amazons as women belonging to a "normal", mixed group, who eventually reduce the male youths to the status of dependent men and fulfil traditional male roles themselves. The number of permutations expands drastically in the Hellenistic texts, which all concentrate on procreation and the need to provide a logical explanation for the survival of the Amazons. It is this need which primarily indicates the existence of a representation of the Amazons as an exclusively female people.

[72] The effect is a reassuring one: the masculinity of the [andres] is confirmed after all.

Our exegesis of the Homeric formula makes considerable demands on the imagination. Nevertheless, it is important to discover the range of connotations embedded in the formula. The above interpretation is a formal one, in that it demonstrates what would happen with the formula if the audience did not know that the [Amazones] were women. However, since the structure of the formula makes it plausible that the Amazones were described as [Amazones antianeirai], and thus characterised as women, from the first, some connotations were highlighted in the Greek tradition, while others were assigned a more subsidiary role. The result of this process can be described as a hierarchy of connotations.

Whenever the femininity of the [Amazones] is indicated, doubts about the masculinity of the [andres] in [antianeirai] are dismissed. The exceptionally important cultural norm that bearing arms and displaying prowess in battle are exclusively male prerogatives is now self-evident. All the same, as a result of the ambiguity of the formula, a turbulent disruption of the norms makes its presence felt behind this guarantee.

First, there is a specific group of women who are equivalent to men in this respect. The important social distinction between men and women in epic is hereby undermined. What is more, men would not engage in fighting with these women at all were unless it was explicitly confirmed that these women were [antianeirai]. This aspect of the Amazons makes them the exception which proves the rule: men will have to prove their privilege with respect to these rivals. Second, the motif of sexuality makes a brief appearance through the contrastive working of [anèr] in the background. This brings a whole range of different relations between men and women into the picture, namely an involvement which is diametrically opposed to the antagonism between combatants. The contrast between fighting and sexuality confirms the prerogative of the male warriors, but at the same time it endangers male emotional autonomy.[73]

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[73] Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire*, pp. 50ff. 70ff. notes that a person who

It is not just the customary opposition between warriors which is momentarily disturbed by this motif. The representation of the Amazons as an exclusively female people also distances them radically from the sexual division of labour of the epic world. The function of the male as a warrior provides him with the opportunity to win fame, but war is also a heavy obligation which demands a high price: a violent death, the inevitable risk of failing as a protector, and the isolation and alienation which this role entails.[74] The *raison d'être* of this sexual division of labour, as we have seen, lies in an oppositional representation of masculinity and femininity as natural qualities. The fact that the Amazons are both women and warriors undermines this legitimacy and with it the idea that it is natural and inevitable. Seen in this light, the Amazons embody an alternative that is not only confusing and menacing, but can also exercise a power of attraction. The potential to escape the burden of the cultural difference between the sexes that is embodied in the Amazons could lend them a utopian aspect.[75] Perhaps this finds expression in the respect for the Amazons as opponents and in the continuity of their presence on the borders of the Greek world.

Thus the formula [Amazones antianeirai], with its wealth of formal linguistic and semantic resources, presents the Amazons as embodying an essential ambiguity in masculinity and femininity.[76] In attempting to grasp the formula in its epic context, we must bear in mind that this ambiguity is essentially incapable of resolution. If the Amazons are to be seen as equivalent to warriors, the masculine aspect must be given prominence. The masculine association of the ethnic designation [Amazones], and the first interpretation of [anti-anèr], both point in this direction. At the

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is under the influence of physical love, [eroos], feels the power which the object of desire exerts over him. He reluctantly assigns a dominant role to the object, and the atmosphere of strife and rivalry which that implies is associated with warfare in many of the various epic and classical texts analysed by Winkler.

[74] For the negative side of heroic life see below, p. 251ff.

[75] The utopian element—as the obverse of primitivism—of a human condition unmarked by gender difference is to be found in representations of the Golden Age; see e.g. Rossellini and Saïd, "Usages de femmes"; Mason, *Deconstructing America*; Versnel, *Transition and Reversal*, ch. II.

[76] The question of where the masculinity and femininity of the Amazons is supposed to reside will be dealt with in the following chapter.

same time, however, a crucial role is played by the feminine aspect, which comes to the fore in the traditional understanding of the term, is indicated in the second interpretation of [antianeirai], and is reinforced by the contrast with [anèr]. The hallmark of the Amazons as a mythical people is precisely that they are martial women. Consequently, this side of them must be expelled from the first aspect in an epic heroic context in some way or other, for a full and deliberate acceptance of the paradox would run up against virtually insoluble problems within the given context. It might even be suggested that the creation and maintenance of such an intensely ambiguous figure is only conceivable in the imaginary world of myth. In examining how the Greeks elaborated the Amazon motif, we shall come across various ways in which they responded to this ambiguity.

The reading of the epithet [antianeirai] advanced here can be tested against Greek interpretations of the word, particularly those put forward by the Greek scholiasts. In doing so, however, it should be borne in mind that the scholia on the *Iliad* which document the ancient interpretations of Homeros are of a much later date than the text to which they refer. Allowing for a date for Homeros somewhere in the eight century and the beginnings of systematic literary criticism in Alexandria, there is a gap of at least five hundred years between them.

The scholia on the Teichoscopy passage (*Il.* III, 188–189)[77] provide the following comments on the term [antianeirai]:

> They (the Amazons, JB) live near the Thermodon. They are daughters of Ares and Harmonia, the nymph and Naiad. The most famous are Hippolyte, Antiope, whom Theseus abducted, Anaia, Andromache, Glauke, Otrere, and Penthesileia, her daughter. In the time of Mygdon, son of Akmon, and Otreus, son of Dymas, they plundered the neighbouring districts, riding on their fire-breathing horses, and later overran Phrygia for booty. They were so called because they lacked one breast— for they cauterized it to prevent it from getting in the way when they used their bows -, or because they did not eat bread [maza], but tortoises, lizards

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[77] There are only two comments on VI, 186, in de Bellerophontes passage: that the Amazons plundered Asia, with a reference to III, 184, the passage in which Priamos describes his Phrygian expedition; and that Ephesos and Smyrna were named after Amazons. The scholiasts do not provide any annotations on [Amazones] or [antianeirai] at this point.

> and snakes. Some say that they are the same as the Sarmatian women. [Antianeirai] means equal to [isai] or hostile to [enantiai] men.
>
> (Schol. ex.)
>
> The Amazons are said to be [antianeirai] in the use of the bow.
>
> (Schol. ad loc., ed. Erbse).

These scholia have made appreciative use of the Amazonology of the classical period. They show that [anti] was understood both in the sense of "equivalent to" and of "opponent of". The following commentary is representative of these later explanations of the epithet:[78]

> Of the [antianeiras Amazonas], Aristarchos says that they were equal to men [isandrous], but some say that they engaged in combat face to face [antiazousas] because they were hostile to men [enantioumenas]; for they were warlike women [polemikai].
>
> (Apoll. Lex. ed. Bekker, 31, 16; Snell, *Lexikon*, s.v. antianeira).

The work of Stephanos of Byzantium (sixth century A.D.) offers a few variations on this theme; the meaning of [anti] as "equivalent to" is here understood as "in place of".[79] The first citation in the *Ethnika* is from Ephoros (fourth century B.C.):

> Amazons, a race of women near the Thermodon, according to Ephoros, who are now known as the Sarmatian women. "It is said of them that they are superior to men by nature, and this is attributed to the nature of the region, as tending to breed physically stronger and larger women than men".

Stephanos follows this with other interpretations:

> They were also called "Sauropatides" (lizard crushers) because they trampled on [patein] lizards and ate them,[80] or (Sarmatians) because they lived in Sarmatian Skythia. There is also a city Amazonia in Messapia.[81] The masculine form [Amazoon], the

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[78] See too Drew-Bear, "Imprecations from Kourion", pp. 89–92.

[79] See too P. Mason, "Third Person/ Second Sex. Patterns of Sexual Asymmetry in the *Theogony* of Hesiodos", in Blok and Mason, eds. *Sexual Asymmetry*, pp. 147–189, esp. p. 153.

[80] This etymology also seems to have been influenced by the Homeric [pateisthai], "eat".

[81] Coastal strip at the south-eastern point of Italy.

> neuter Amazonion with the i, and the (matronymic) Amazonidès are also used.
>
> (Steph. Byz. *Ethnika*, s.v. Amazones)[82]

The statement that [Amazoon] is also used in the masculine form is cited by Theognostus (ninth century A.D.), who adds:

> as in Kallimachos; "where the Amazon men are".[83]

Kallimachos would seem to be engaging in some obscure play of words here. Possibly he has used some elements of the traditional formula, such as the word [andres] in the epithet [anti-aneir-a-i], or even the latent presence of the notion of "men" in the ethnic designation [Amazones]. Intricacies of this kind may be expected from an academic poet who enjoyed playing with words as Kallimachos did. The fragment probably draws on the Amazonology which had included males among the Amazons, which would also explain Theognostus' remark.

There is thus an evident continuity in the textual representation of the Amazons. They are a people consisting of women; only in one specific case does the grammatical masculine deviate from the conventional feminine. [Antianeirai], however, undergoes a change of emphasis. Besides the epic "equivalent (to men)", later understood as "in place of", [anti] is strengthened to become [isos], "equal to", while the tradition associated with Ephoros even goes so far as to state that, at least in the region where the Amazons come from, the women are physically superior to the men. In this way the epic epithet acquires the meaning of "opponents of men", "hostile to men".

How are we to account for this shift from "equivalent to men" to "hostile to men"? Did the epic [anti] later acquire the current meaning of "anti", and did this result in an inability to recognise the epic meaning on the part of the later authors? It is more likely that the element of resistance or hostility expressed in the epithet, and which is only one aspect of [anti] in the later Greek sources, has been taken for an explanation or interpretation of the much commoner meaning of [anti] in the sense of "equivalent to".[84] The Amazons were opposed to men precisely by appearing "as men" in battle: after all, this represented a sphere in which men compete with other men on the basis of hostility, as Pindaros described the situation of internal strife [stasis]. What other opponents could the Amazons expect to find on the field of battle if not men?

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[82] The reference to the masculine form implies the existence of the feminine form. The text does not exclude the possibility that [Amazoon] refers to the city of Amazonia; in that case, it would mean "citizen of Amazonia". This phrase may also refer to the text of Kallimachos, as is made clear in the citation from Theognostus.

[83] Callimachus, ed. Pfeiffer; Fragmenta (incertae sedis), no. 721; Cf. id., *Hymnus in Dianam*, 237: . . . [Amazonides . . . epithumètheirai]. Kallimachos refers to the Amazons as feminine.

This development indicates how the martial capacities of the Amazons, which render them "equivalent to men" in epic, are interpreted as the result of a nature which is hostile to men. Perhaps the connection lies in the disturbing idea of the redundancy of men; the Amazons act in place of [anti] men. It is not possible to determine whether this explicit representation of their [anti-aneira] nature was also a feature of the epic narratives on the Amazons. This may well be a one-sided view of the notion of [antianeirai] in an attempt to resolve the ambiguity of the image of the Amazons by pinning it down to a single meaning. As we shall see, the approaches to the question of kinship reveal the same endeavour, though the solution in that case lies in a different direction.

The epithet [androleteira], "destroyer of men", which has been preserved in Pind. *Nem.* III, 64 and was earlier attributed to Hesiodos, must have been developed by analogy at a later date.[85] It is not to be found in the Homeric texts. The meaning of [androleteira] is comparable to that of [androphonos] and the ancient formation [andreïphontes], terms which refer to the destructive character of battle in general. Seen from this point of view, "hostile to men" is an interpretation which is logically consistent with the meaning of "equivalent to men" and which is made explicit in [androleteira], but which need not be identical to [antianeirai]. Only the feminine termination distinguishes [antianeirai] and [androleteira] from these two epithets.

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[84] *LSJ*, s.v. [anti]. From epic Greek to Common Greek, [anti] is only rarely used in the sense of "against", and then only in certain expressions. As a rule, the word for "against" is [enanti; enantios], as in the citation to be found in the *Lexikon* of Snell et al.: [antiazousas] because [enantioumenas].

[85] Unlike [antianeirai], [androleteira] cannot be an ancient formation (C.J. Ruijgh, personal communication). The compounds ending in [-tèr], fem. [-teira or -tria] are not usually composed with a noun as the first member. It is also important to note that [androleteira] occupies a different position to [antianeirai] in the hexameter.

Besides the learned commentators, the literary reception of [Amazones antianeirai] may help us to obtain a more precise definition of the epithet. The Amazons occur a few times in the work of Aischylos, who is chronologically closer to the epic tradition and used it in his own way. On two occasions he lends them a particular characteristic, but he does not call them [antianeirai]. Instead, he uses the epithets [anandroi] and [stuganoor]:

> What you say, foreign women, is incredible, that you are Argive by birth. For you are much more like Libyan women and not at all like those from this land. The Nile too could rear such an offspring, and similar is the Kyprian impress stamped on women's forms by male artificers. And so, I am told, are the Indian nomads, mounted on camels which move like horses, pillion-riding, in a country that borders on Aithiopia. If you were armed with the bow, you would closely resemble the meat-eating Amazons without men. When further informed, I would know how your descent and origin can be from Argos.
>
> (*Suppl.* 277–290)

> You must bend your path southwards, when you will come to the host of man-hating Amazons, who one day will settle at Themiskyra by the Thermodon (. . . .). These Amazons will guide you on your way, and gladly.
>
> (*PV* 723–728)[86]

The other references to the Amazons are in the *Eumenides*:

> Yes, for it is not the same—the death of a noble man,
> honoured by the Zeus-given sceptre,
> and by a women's hands at that, not by martial
> far-darting arrows, as of an Amazon,
> but even as I shall tell you, Pallas.
>
> (*Eumenides* 625–629)

> And this hill of Ares, where the Amazons had their seat
> and pitched their tents, when they came in hatred of Theseus
> with an army, and over against the city
> raised this new city with high walls—

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[86] Although the authorship of the *Prometheus Vinctus* is disputed, it will be discussed here on a par with the other tragedies of Aischylos, with which it is certainly contemporary.

so they sacrificed to Ares, thus giving a name
to the rock and hill of Ares.

(*Eumenides* 685–690)[87]

The first passage is the speech in which Pelasgos, king of Argos, addresses the Danaidai who appeal to him as suppliants. Their dress is not Greek [barbaros] (235), and they do not look like Greek women at all (237). The king is thus surprised to hear that they claim to come from Argos. This passage combines old and new, traditional and classical elements. The drama as a whole is set in the mythical era, and the foreign peoples who are introduced in this passage are also to be found in the Homeric texts: the Libyans, Aithiopians, Kypriots and Amazons. Nevertheless, the entire passage is intended to stress the non-Greek character of the peoples in question, since Pelasgos is unable to recognize the Danaidai as Greek women. He emphasizes their non-Greek dress and behaviour, and refers to exotic women on camels. This more contemporary element can also be found in the representation of the Amazons as archers from the North, which was popular from the sixth century on.[88] This aspect of the passage as a whole suggests that the interpretation of the Amazons is also situated at the point of intersection of two axes: the traditional epic image, and the interest in the contours of distant lands which later came to predominate. In this respect, the diet of other peoples plays an important part as an index of their degree of barbarism. "Meat-eating" contrasts with the implicit dietary norm of the Greek world, in which meat played only a small part.[89]

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[87] In line 688, [hupsipurgon . . . antepurgoosan], the fortress of the Amazons must be [anti] the fortress which already stood there, viz. that of Athena and Theseus. Is this an echo of [antianeirai]? In this passage [anti] may mean "over against" or "equal to, as large as". If one recalls the building of towers by rival factions in Greek Mani or in Italian San Gimignano, both meanings might be equally relevant.

[88] H.A. Shapiro, "Amazons, Thracians, and Scythians", in *GRBS* 24, 1983, pp. 105–114.

[89] For the normative character of diet in the portrayal of the Other from a general perspective, see e.g. Vandenbroeck, *Beeld van de Andere*; for the same phenomenon within a specifically Greek context see e.g. Rossellini and Saïd, "Usages de femmes" and Shaw, "Eaters of Flesh, Drinkers of Milk"; for its role in Greek tragedy see E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian. Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*, Oxford 1989.

In the passage from the *Prometheus*, in which Prometheus is explaining Io's route to her, the primary polarity is not that between Greek and non-Greek, but the position occupied by the Amazons *vis-à-vis* men and women. Aischylos refers implicitly to the [antianeira] character of the Amazons. They form an army [stratos], and once again they are portrayed as soldiers. Moreover, they are [stuganoor], a unique term, composed of [anèr] plus the verbal stem [stug-]. [Stuganoor] means "hating men". The passage produces a contrast: the men-hating Amazons will be pleased [mal' asmenoos] to help Io; in doing so, they will be behaving as good female hostesses and as they are expected to behave towards members of the same sex. As a whole, the passage on the Amazons portrays them as female soldiers who live in perpetual hostility to men and who assist other women.

The first passage from the *Eumenides* is taken from the trial of Orestes in which Apollo speaks on behalf of his protegé, who has killed his mother Klytaimnestra, after she had killed her husband—Orestes' father—Agamemnon. In this passage, the Amazons are clearly intended to contrast with Klytaimnestra: while the latter killed her husband in a cowardly manner, the Amazons wield their weapons as real warriors. The use of the epithet here translated as "martial" [thour(i)os], a regular epithet of Ares in epic, indicates an awareness on Aischylos' part of the genealogy by which Ares was regarded as the father of the Amazons.[90] The entire passage thus presents the Amazons as full-blown, manly warriors and as women who have a right to bear their weapons.

The second passage from the *Eumenides*, in which Pallas Athena says a few concluding words on the place where the extraordinary sentence has been pronounced, presents a similar picture and implies the same genealogy. Although the Amazons are unmistakably opponents of Theseus, the ancient *pater patriae* and of the city of Athens, their reputation as genuine warriors is not called into question. It is in fact the initial success of their campaign—they camped near the city's defences—that indicates their quality as warriors. The Areopagos owes its name to their sacrifice to Ares—the Greek god of war, who is probably also to be taken to be their father in this context. The phrase "in hatred of Theseus" must refer to Theseus' abduction of the Amazon Antiope. This story, which originated at the end of the sixth century, had by now been enlarged with an Amazon campaign in Attika to exact vengeance, in which the analogy with the Persian invasion was of decisive importance.[91] The passage from the *Eumenides* is the first testimonium of this version.

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[90] One testimonium is the *Aithiopis*, in which Penthesileia was called the daughter of Ares, according to Proclus' summary. Ares' role as their father can also be seen if [Arè-io-s], "warlike" is interpreted as "child of Ares" by a patronymic use of [-io-].

We can also detect two other themes in this passage. Since we may assume that the role of Ares as the father of the Amazons is of some importance here, the question arises of who their mother was. Later texts often give the name of the nymph Harmonia, and sometimes the Amazon Otrere, as the mother of the Amazons; the maternal descent of Antiope is unclear. Theseus and Antiope were the parents of Hippolytos, whose birth from the Amazon has traumatic consequences in Euripides' tragedy of the same name. Motherhood is a problematical feature of this genealogy, which ties in closely with the line of argument which Apollo develops during the trial of Orestes in the *Eumenides*. He declares that Orestes is not guilty of murdering a blood relative, because his mother was no more than a field in which his father's seed came to fruition.[92]

A second theme is the name of the Areopagos itself. Aischylos ignores the tradition according to which Ares was tried on this hill for killing the son of Poseidon and Euryte, Halirrothios, who was supposed to have made indecent advances to a daughter of Ares and Aglauros. Ares was acquitted because the gods were unable to reach a decision.[93] Why did Aischylos consider this myth a less suitable parallel? Does it represent an excessive subordination of patriarchy to a more general legal principle, a process which is applied in favour of the male line of descent in the *Eumenides*? At any rate, in his version of the naming, Aischylos added a new case to the series of places on Greek territory whose name was derived from the Amazons. As far as the Areopagos is concerned, the sacrifice by the Amazons to their father is the crucial element: it is a cultic ritual, which is not immediately connected with the fatal combat between Amazons and heroes.[94]

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[91] Boardman, "Herakles, Theseus and the Amazons", contains a summary of the discussion of this aspect. Herodotos notes that the Athenians cited this invasion as a heroic deed in their speech before the battle of Plataiai (IX, 27). It is not certain that this was actually said, but there were certainly rumours circulating to this effect when Herodotos visited Athens around 450. Aischylos' *Eumenides* was performed in 458, so that, as Boardman states, this story was known at the time, viz. ca. 460 . For the interpretation of this material, see my "Patronage and the Pisistratidae", *BABesch* 65, 1990, pp. 17–28.

[92] *Eum.* 657–666; for Athena's birth without a mother, see *ibid.* 736–740. On this question see F. I. Zeitlin, "The Dynamics of Misogyny: Myth and Mythmaking in the *Oresteia*", *Arethusa* 11, 1978, pp. 149–185.

[93] There is a more or less contemporary testimonium for this tradition in Hellanikos *FGrHist* 4 F 169a.

If we take these four passages from Aischylos as a whole, a coherent picture emerges. The Amazons are women who live without men [anandroi]; they adopt a hostile attitude to men; and they are their equivalent in combat. This is all consistent with the epic image, as is the reference to Ares. The epithet "meat-eating" [kreoboroi] may also have an epic connotation, for it is the epic heroes who consume large quantities of (raw) meat [kreas] in their thirst for the fight, which is inspired by Ares. However, Aischylos uses the notion of [kreoboros] in a new context as well to stress the non-Greek character of foreign peoples. The Amazons are no exception in this respect, even though they display some degree of civilization in their attitude towards female foreigners. The epithet "without men" [anandroi] puts heavy emphasis on the exclusively feminine character of the Amazons as a people; the word [stratos] emphasizes their character as [isai] to men. These notions are in fact implicit in the potential of the epithet [antianeira], while [stuganoor] is a more pronounced interpretation of that term, which closely approximates to [enantiai].

It is also worth devoting some attention to the difference between the Aischylean epithets and the formula [Amazones antianeirai]. All of the adjectives which have been considered so far are compounds: [anti- aneirai], [andr-oleteira], [an-androi], [kreo-boroi] and [stug-anoor]. It is striking that the last three follow the usual pattern of behaviour of compound adjectives, in that they do not have a specifically feminine form, so that both men and women are referred to by the epithet with a masculine termination. The indisputably female Amazons are thus described with these epithets with masculine terminations in the Aischylean passages. In the Homeric formula, however, things are different, for there the Amazons are characterized by an adjective with an explicitly feminine termination.[95] It is these epithets which indicate a shift of emphasis between the epic portrayal of the Amazons to that of the classical period.[96] In the case of the former, with the ambiguous Homeric formula [Amazones antianeirai], the fact that the Amazons were women was a traditional given; in the Aischylean texts, on the other hand, the epithet [anandroi] excludes the possibility of their being male. The use by Aischylos of epithets with regular terminations which do not distinguish between masculine and feminine suggests that he has attempted to tone down the ambiguity inherent in the epic formula, a picture which is confirmed by his treatment of the Amazon motif.

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[94] In his account of the Amazon episode in his life of Theseus (27), Ploutarchos states that the details of this combat cannot be ascertained with certainty, but that it is evident that the hostilities were concluded with a treaty. This is proved by the name of the spot next to the temple of Theseus, the [Harkomosion], so called because of the oaths which were sworn there, and the sacrifice which was formerly made to the Amazons for the festival of Theseus.

Aischylos has to gauge his own representations against the epic [antianeirai], but since all he can do is to interpret this tradition, the shift of emphasis becomes understandable. Where he gives the characteristics of the Amazons a new accent, he is following trends which had already set in during the preceding decennia and which were to play an increasingly important role: the perception and integration of the non-Greek world and, on the level of mythical narrative, the Amazon invasion to retaliate for the abduction of Antiope. In the mental climate that had been developing since the sixth century, it was only natural to give the special identity of the Amazons a new meaning with the pregnant term [barbaros]. The ambiguities of masculinity and femininity which were implicit in the epic formula were rendered explicit and distinguished as separate elements by Aischylos. The Amazons are women, who live in an exclusively female world. They behave as men, they identify with their father, they are not married, and they prove their bravery [andreia] in war. Apart from these elements, the Aischylean portrait of the Amazons conforms to the Homeric one. It was in epic that this elusive female people operated and displayed itself as "equivalent to men". As for their other characteristics, particularly their role as eponymous heroines, all that is left is the sacrifice that confirms the relation of the Amazons to the god of war, Ares.

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[95] Since [androleteira] also entails the application of a feminine termination to an Amazon, Melanippe, this indicates that the word may have been formed by analogy with [antianeira(i)]. This does not exclude the possibility of a neologism and can be reconciled with the probable later date of the fragment in question, see above, n. 85.

[96] G.P. Shipp, *Studies in the Language of Homer*, Cambridge 1972/2, pp. 72–74, discusses examples of the reverse procedure: feminine epithets which have been given a masculine termination. Although he claims that these forms may have begun in the early phase, he regards the distribution of this phenomenon as a late feature in accordance with the criteria mentioned above. His conclusions on the phenomenon itself are brief; occasionally he sees the application of a given formula in a new version as the pretext. His researches do not throw any light on the problem of the Amazon epithets.

As a whole, the material shows how difficult it is to grasp the mental image of "women, who are as warrior-like as men". The idea of an "Amazon" is unstable and divergent. At one point the female identity of the Amazons is emphasized, at another it is hidden from sight by hiding it behind masculine themes connected with war.

The formula and the problem of epic chronology

Finally, we have to consider the question of the chronology and composition of the formula [Amazones antianeirai]. Some scholars try to locate chronological criteria in the development of the oral tradition as a whole. The main arguments in this respect are well represented by the dispute between G.S. Kirk and W. Whallon. Kirk regards the early phase of the oral tradition as the most creative, followed by a degree of formalization and ending in the conservation of fixed texts by rhapsodes.[97] The best and most specific formulae are thus taken to belong to the oldest strata of the tradition. W. Whallon, on the other hand, has argued that the compilation of a well-furnished repertoire of formulae is a lengthy process, and that it is only at the end of the tradition that the epic singers had the most typical formulae at their disposal.[98]

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[97] Kirk, *The Songs of Homer*, pp. 81ff.

[98] W. Whallon, *Formula, Character and Context. Studies in Homeric, Old English and Old Testament Poetry*, Cambridge Mass. 1969; cf. P. Vivante, *The Epithets in Homer. A Study in Poetic Values*, New Haven/London 1982.

This approach is primarily intended to assist in the dating of "Homeros" and in the determination of the position of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in the development of the oral tradition. The question of the qualitative uniqueness of Homeros is directly related to the technical aspects of oral poetry. Kirk's monumental study betrays unmistakable traces of a "rise and fall" conception,[99] in which Homeros is naturally taken to represent the flourishing of the tradition, while the tradition of the rhapsodes, which Kirk takes to have extended from the eighth century[100] to the Peisistratid redaction of the Homeric texts, is regarded as embodying the sclerosis of what was once a living tradition. However, it is the very quality of the Homeric epics which is awkward to fit in with this argumentation. There are too few extant texts comparable to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to justify a balanced assessment of the problem. Neither the poems of Hesiodos nor the Homeric Hymns are close enough to the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* in terms of narrative content to serve as comparative material in this respect. As for the remains of the Epic Cycle, they give an indication of the unusual character of the Homeric epics, if only for their exceptional length, but it is precisely those aspects which contribute to the quality of the Homeric poems—the story, the similes, the perspective on human experiences confronted by the will of the gods—which can only be evaluated within the context of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* themselves. There is simply not enough textual material for any comparison with the underlying tradition.

Moreover, for some ten or fifteen years awareness has been growing of the need to situate the question of the date of Homeros within the entire reconstruction of orality and literate culture in archaic Greece.[101] It is therefore preferable to approach the question of the dating of certain formulae as a separate problem, though it may later prove to throw light on the discussions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The formula [Amazones antianeirai], and the narrative motif to which it relates, viz. the role of the Amazons in epic poetry, will therefore be analysed independently of the debate on Homeros and the influence of the use of writing on epic.

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[99] A. Parry, "Have we Homer's "Iliad"?" , *YClS* 20, 1966, pp. 175–216, even calls Kirk's view Spenglerian, p. 209.

[100] U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff's dating of Homeros in the eighth century remains the basis of argumentation in these publications. See too C.A. Trypanis, *The Homeric Epics*, Warminster 1977, p. 29.

[101] For a summary and interpretation of this issue, see my "De Homerische epen tussen oraliteit en schriftcultuur" in P.W. de Neeve and H.W.A.M. Sancisi- Weerdenburg, eds. *Kaleidoskoop van de Oudheid*, Groningen 1989, pp. 14–27, 229–231.

The epic narratives and the form in which they have been cast have to be treated as independent elements if we are to understand them better. The epic material very probably has an earlier, Indo-European history in the process of development of Greek epic.[102] The rhythmic character and formulaic structure of the poetic technique had a decisive influence on the form of expression. The fact that a close connection arose between the content of the narrative and the way in which it was narrated is evident from the Homeric epics.

Research on the origins of the hexameter offers a relatively sharp perspective because it does not immediately treat the subjective aspect of literary quality as a factor, but here too, of course, controversies abound as well. The development of the hexameter and the formulae created within it can be analysed using methods which combine attention to metrical and historico-linguistic research independently of the content of the text. On the other hand, it is also possible to attach greater importance to the epic material which is embodied in formulae and to assess these findings against linguistic data. The first of these approaches has the advantage that the historico-linguistic data provide a relatively solid foundation for the relative chronology of the language of epic and even offers opportunities for an absolute chronology.[103] This approach will therefore be followed in the present chapter. The second approach will be utilized in the section on Penthesileia, because there the visual material can be integrated better with the textual and linguistic data.

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[102] The process of a gradual incorporation, processing and, probable loss of elements from different periods of Greek culture in the epic material is highly controversial. Cf. M.L. West, "The Rise of Greek Epic", *JHS* 108, 1988, 151–172; for criticism of West's views, see J. Chadwick, "The Descent of the Greek Epic", *JHS* 110, 1990, pp. 174–177 (though Chadwick fails to discuss the position of C.J. Ruijgh discussed below).

[103] R. Janko, *Homer, Hesiod and the Homeric Hymns. Diachronic Development in Epic Diction*, Oxford 1982 has developed a method of his own. On the basis of phonetic shifts which can be traced in the development of the epic language, he has tried to determine the rate of change with the assistance of computerized techniques. These changes, such as the disappearance of the digamma, are regarded as resembling the life-cycle of a river, whose entire course can be gauged from the rate of flow of a smaller segment. Janko treats the texts of Homeros, Hesiodos and the Homeric Hymns as records taken at a given point in time, and making use of the rate of decay, he

On the basis of an extensive series of examples, including the description of Herakles as [biè Hèraklèeiè], C.J. Ruijgh has demonstrated that the formation of the hexameter probably dates from the Minoan era.[104] This focuses attention on the discrepancy between the epic material and the structure of the hexameter in which it is embedded. The Minoan origin of the hexameter could explain why epic diction is such an artificial combination of dialects and linguistic stages: since Minoan is not Greek, the Mykenaian (i.e. Greek) development of the epic which Ruijgh proposes implies that the language had to be adapted to an external metrical structure.[105] The development of epic diction is thus seen as extending from a hypothetical Minoan prehistory as far as the metrical form is concerned, via a pre-Mykenaian, a Mykenaian, an Aiolic and an Ionian phase, down to the eighth and seventh centuries in Euboia.

In considering whether linguistic arguments can help to throw

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attempts to determine the date at which a particular word was incorporated in the diction. However, he adheres *a priori* to a traditional date for Hesiodos and Homeros, which limits the virtues of his approach. C.J. Ruijgh also opts for a date for Homeros in the eighth century in his review of A. Heubeck, *Schrift*, Göttingen 1979 in *Mnemosyne* 36, 1983, pp. 162–167, but he rightly points out that the writing down of epic presupposes a process of alphabetization which must have already been under way for some centuries. He therefore assumes that the use of writing must have been known for much longer than the traditional picture of the "Dark Ages" would allow, even though we no longer have any traces of this development. For comparative arguments in favour of Ruijgh's views, see Goody, *The Interface*, pp. 98ff. M.L. West, *Hesiod. Theogony*. Oxford 1966, pp. 46–47, assumes a later date for alphabetization and concludes that the Homeric texts were written down around the middle of the seventh century. West's dating finds some support in the visual record, which only allows one to suppose the existence of "Homeros" at the end of the seventh century; see A. Snodgrass, "Poet and Painter in Eighth-Century Greece", *PCPS* n.s. 25, 1979, pp. 118–130 (although the arguments advanced in this article doe not take the orality debate into account).

[104] " . . . cette formule nom-épithète (in Mykenaian, JB) remplit un hexamètre *holodactylique entier*. Ceci prouve que ce vers épique existait déjà dans la première moitié de l'époque mycénienne. Dans ces conditions, il est nettement préférable d'admettre l'origine minoenne de l'hexamètre dactylique (..)." Ruijgh, "Le Mycénien et Homère", p. 163. At the conclusion of his article, he stresses the hypothetical nature of his conclusions, but the detailed examples that he presents are very convincing.

[105] Ruijgh, "Le Mycénien", pp. 150–151.

light on the relative antiquity of the formula [Amazones antianeirai], Ruijgh points out that *anti-aner-ya, like *arguropedya, displays the e-stage before the suffix *ya, as against the o-stage in the masculine, as in [Antènoor]. This may be a sign of very early formation. The restoration of [anti-] instead of the elided form as in [Antènoor] may have taken place for metrical reasons.[106] It may therefore be concluded that [antianeirai] belongs to the extremely ancient strata of epic diction. As for the relative antiquity of [Amazones], little can be said on that score. However, given the close connection between the proper name and the epithet, the assessment of the epithet has a bearing on the formula as a whole.

Finally, to turn to the narrative content of the epic, since the notion of the "eternal fame" which the hero acquires links Greek epic with the Indo-European prehistory of heroic poetry,[107] we may ask whether a relation can be established between the metrical and linguistic arguments, on the one hand, and the content and purport of the epic, on the other. This question has been answered in the affirmative by J. Russo,[108] who refers to the tension between the fixed corpus of words and themes which has been

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[106] Personal communication, 11.5.1989. [arguropeza], from *arguropedya (e.g. in Myk. we-pe-za, six-footed, as applied to tables) is also a good example of a word that was originally used as a noun, but which came to be used as an adjective. As we have seen, it is normal for nouns to have a separate feminine form. Antènoor, as an example of the o-stage, already has a Mykenaian form, viz. a-ta-no, i.e. [Ant-anoor]. The elided form [antèneirai] was a theoretical possibility in dactylic metre, but it would have resulted in a spondaic fifth foot. As R.S.P. Beekes has pointed out to me, lines with a spondaic fifth foot were commoner in the earlier period. It is therefore not inconceivable that [antia-] has replaced an even older form [antèneirai], but this is purely hypothetical.

[107] West, "The Rise of the Greek Epic", pp. 152–156; F. Graf, "Religion und Mythologie in Zusammenhang mit Homer", in J. Lataczs, ed. *Zweihundert Jahre Homer- Forschung*, Leipzig/ Stuttgart 1991, p.331–362. On the formula [kleos aphthiton], an important indication for this tradition, see further below.

[108] J. Russo, "How and What does Homer Communicate?" in E.A. Havelock and J.P. Hershbell, eds, *Communication Arts in the Ancient World*, New York 1978, pp. 39–49. He partly follows the findings of K. O'Nolan, "Homer and Irish Heroic Narrative", *CQ* xix, 1969, pp. 1–19, who suggested that it was the final two and a half feet of the Greek hexameter which first received a fixed form, followed by the first half of the hexameter, which displays the greatest flexibility of more and less formulaic expressions. According to O'Nolan, it is the formulae consisting of a noun plus an epithet at the end of the hexameter which contain the essential notions of Homeric epic. However, O'Nolan's views are incompatible with Ruijgh's findings.

handed down by tradition and the element of improvization that is a part of every oral performance. In this connection, Russo distinguishes five levels at which this tension can be detected: the external dactylic metre; the internal rhythm of the cola and the required caesurae;[109] the specific diction, including that of the formulae; the themes or short narrative segments; and the view of people and the world which is encapsulated in the epics. Russo's criteria cover both formal and substantial aspects of the formulae. He emphasizes that key concepts tend to be placed at the end of the hexameter, and concludes that if a formula meets both criteria—content and position—it may be assumed to have been shaped and incorporated in the tradition at an early date. Although Russo's account of epic composition contains useful insights, his findings do not justify the drawing of conclusions on the relative chronology of specific formulae. It can certainly be noted that proper names often appear in the second half of the hexameter, preferably at the line end; that characters are indicated there by a description if their proper name is not easy to accommodate in the metre;[110] and that the cadence of the hexameter leads the listener on to the end of the line. It has already often been wondered whether epic diction originally tied a unit of content to the unit of one hexameter;[111] in this case, the notion of "original" introduces a relative chronological framework. Closer analysis, however, demonstrates that neither the frequency of the formula nor the position that it occupies in the hexameter are an indication of relative chronology. As A.T. Edwards puts it:

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[109] "It is important to stress their positive functions, as norms for preferred word-ending at definite points within the verse, rather than viewing them all negatively as prohibitions on the use of certain word-types at certain places." Russo, "How and What", p. 43. Cf. Beekes, above, n. 31.

[110] Cf. B. Snell, *Die Entdeckung des Geistes. Studien zur Entstehung des Europäischen Denkens bei den Griechen*, Göttingen 1975/4, p. 29. Although Snell's theses are no longer acceptable to many scholars, his observations on epic Greek, particularly in connection with his objective of comprehending the view of the world embodied in it, are still worthy of attention.

[111] For this debate and the relevant literature see Van Raalte, *Rhythm and Metre*, pp. 67ff; her conclusion is negative: there is no correlation between the unit of the line and the semantic unit. Judgement depends to a large extent on the way in which enjambement in epic is defined. Kirk, "Studies in some Technical Aspects of Homeric Style, part II," *YClS* 1966, pp. 105–152, investigates enjambement in order to determine its stylistic effect. The fact that the Homeric epics represent a very late stage in the development of epic

> What is ancient in Homeric diction are the phonic, semantic and thematic associations among words, and a technique of exploiting these traditional links to produce poetry. The formula and the formulaic expression are equally the products of this tradition, differing in frequency of occurrence, but not necessarily in age (. . .). I am of the opinion that oral theory simply has little to add to the debate (on the chronology of formulae, JB) (. . .). On the contrary, it stresses the homogeneity of Homer's diction, the tendency for old and new to be mixed indiscriminately on the basis of need and through the analogical mechanisms—the 'flexibility'—of the formulaic expression.[112]

This can be illustrated by the following example. Whallon has once again raised the question of the function of the epithets in connection with the chronology of the tradition. In this connection, he has investigated whether Hektor really is "man-killing" [androphonos] at the points where he is given this epithet, or whether the epithet is added for purely metrical reasons. He finds a confirmation of his position:

> (. . .) that a poet was creating acute characterization—with epithets that tended to be distinctive (because they distinguished more and more between men of metrically identical names) and tended to be relevant to epic matter as a whole and sometimes to the immediate context (by virtue of being here and there exemplified)—at the *end* of the tradition.[113]

However, there are arguments which call Whallon's conclusion into question. His analysis ignores the position of the formula. The genitive declension of Hektor's name cannot be placed at the end of the hexameter, the preferred position for such names in epic. In an extended narrative on the fighting in Troy, a poet is bound to use "Hektor" in the genitive sooner or later, so an epithet will have to be added to complete the line properly. Hektor is designated [androphonos] eleven times in the *Iliad*,

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makes it difficult to draw conclusions about the earliest stages. O'Nolan's isosyllabism cannot be proved, according to Van Raalte, *Rhythm and Metre*, p. 103; although his main argument bears, not on Greek prosody, but on a comparative analysis of Greek and Irish epic.

[112] Edwards, "KLEOS APHTHITON", pp. 29–30, in discussion with M. Finkelberg, "Is KLEOS APHTHITON a Homeric formula?" *CQ* 1986, pp. 1–5.

[113] W. Whallon, "Is Hector *androphonos*?" in *Arktouros. Hellenic Studies presented to Bernard M.W. Knox*, G.W. Bowersock, W. Burkert and M.C.S. Putnam, eds, Berlin/New York 1979, pp. 19–24; p. 23.

each time in the genitive case. Eight of these eleven cases occur at the end of the line, the other three occur at the beginning [Hektoros androphonoio].[114] In addition, [androphonos] is used in combination with another word on four occasions, two of which feature a combination with a proper noun in the genitive case: once for Ares and once for Lykourgos.[115] In short, Hektor is the only one of the Homeric heroes who is [androphonos], though the epithet is also applied to Ares and Lykourgos in the epic; moreover, he is [androphonos] in the genitive case, and primarily at the end of the line.

It is thus inadmissible to claim simply that distinctive epithets are typical of the end of the tradition, for a long tradition without "Hektor" in the genitive is difficult to imagine. On the other hand, formulae consisting of a noun plus a distinctive epithet at a specific position in the line indicate the connection between semantic factors and metrical considerations—a phenomenon which Parry had already described as a principle of oral verse, not as a chronological development.[116] To sum up, apart from criteria of historical linguistics, there is no single uncontroversial criterium for determining the internal chronology of the oral tradition. The most that we can do is to regard the combination of certain elements as a tentative indication of an older or later date (see chapter III).

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[114] End of the line: I, 242; IX, 351; XVI, 77, 840; XVII, 428, 616; XVIII, 149; XXIV, 509. Beginning of the line: VI, 498; XVII, 638; XXIV, 724.

[115] IV, 441: [Areos androphonio], beginning of the line; VI, 134: [androphonoio Lykourgou], end of the line.

[116] While Russo and Whallon lay the most emphasis on the content of the epic, Shipp's *Studies in the Language of Homer* focus exclusively on language on the basis of historico-grammatical and phonetic clues. All the same, the objective is the same: to contribute to a chronology of the tradition. The one-sidedness of this approach raises questions about its cogency. For instance, Shipp speaks of a Homeric norm (p. 5), because he distinguishes archaisms and neologisms as "unusual features" (p. 3). There is nothing wrong with the general statement that Aiolic belongs to the more ancient elements while Attic dates from the last redaction (p. 4), but it has to be read in conjunction with the peculiar characteristic of oral poetry to preserve archaic forms as a living component of epic diction. Shipp follows these and other criteria, such as a distinction between the narrative proper and digressions, to determine the relative chronology of various passages in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; he assumes the Amazon passages to belong to the digressions, which he considers on the whole to be "later". He does not detect any linguistic signs of a later date in the Teichoscopy as a whole, but he finds a relatively large number in the scene involving Glaukos and Diomedes (pp. 238ff; pp. 255–258). However, there are grounds for doubting the applicability of a categorical distinction between narrative and digression in an oral poetic tradition.

To confine ourselves to the linguistic arguments, then, it may be concluded that, when the word [Amazones] was introduced to the formulaic world as a people of women, this was so exceptional that the poet had to resort to what we have seen on linguistic grounds to be the very old epithet [antianeirai].[117] Despite the antiquity of the formula, however, there is no need to assume that the application of the formula in the passages in the extant *Iliad* must also be traditional, for ancient formulae can be utilized in new contexts if the thematic structure of the narrative calls for it.

The hierarchy of connotations which we have seen to be lodged in the formula [Amazones antianeirai] and in the word [Amazones] itself indicates that this epic formula embodies the cultural and semantic ambiguity of the Amazons. It is no longer possible to determine how the connection between the formation of [Amazones]—with the striking word end in the fourth foot of the hexameter—and the choice of the epithet [antianeirai]—with its unusual formal and semantic character—came about. The genesis of the Amazons as a people in the world of epic mythology cannot be determined outside the formula and the epic context in which it is situated.

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[117] All of the linguistic analogies to [antianeirai] date from the Mykenaian period (ca. 1400–1200 B.C.). For the highly schematic dates see Ruijgh, "Le Mycénien", pp. 146–147.

CHAPTER THREE

PENTHESILEIA

The words of Thersites

As we have seen, the singers of Greek epic and their audience knew the Amazons as a name: the formula combining the ethnic designation [Amazones] with the fascinating and ambiguous epithet [antianeirai]. While it has been possible to determine that this formula is probably very old, we have not yet offered an account of the stories in which this formula could be utilized. What stories are they, are they as old as the formula, and what is the relation between story and formula?

Although the formula can be found in two passages of the *Iliad*, the stories in which it occurs—the speech of Priamos and the heroic life of Bellerophontes—hardly contribute to a better understanding of the Amazon motif itself. In these passages the Amazons are mentioned as opponents without any further context, and the role they play is at first sight a minor one. It is therefore necessary to leave the *Iliad* aside for the time being and to concentrate on a story in which an Amazon is the leading character.

The story of the Amazon queen Penthesileia has been recorded as a part of the Trojan cycle and is known from the epic *Aithiopis*. After the death of Hektor, the Amazon and her army entered the war on the Trojan side. She was killed in a duel with the best of the Achaians, Achilles. The summary of the epic in Proclus' *Chrestomathia* offers an intriguing version of the Amazon motif.

> The Amazon Penthesileia, a daughter of Ares, a Thrakian by [genos], comes to the help of the Trojans. Achilles kills her as she is acting like a hero [aristeousan], and the Trojans bury her. And Achilles kills Thersites because he has been abused and mocked by him for his alleged [eroos] for Penthesileia. A dispute arises among the Achaians over the killing of Thersites. After this

> Achilles sails for Lesbos, and after sacrificing to Apollon, Artemis and Leto he is purified of the killing by Odysseus.
>
> (*Chrestomathia* II, ed. Davies)

The fragment from the *Aithiopis* containing the essentials of the Penthesileia motif displays a fascinating ambiguity. Was it rumoured that Achilles had fallen in love with Penthesileia [legomenon eroota], and did he intend to end it once and for all by silencing the person who dared to voice it in public? Why does Achilles react so strongly to Thersites' words?

Present-day readers might explain this overreaction by supposing that Thersites had hit upon a sensitive chink in Achilles' emotional armour. His passion for an enemy caused feelings of guilt and shame, so that he attempted to disguise the [eroos] which lay at the root of this discomfort. The double secrecy intensified his guilt feelings. Thersites brought this inner conflict out into the open, and Achilles' anger was an unintentional proof that Thersites' allegations were correct. In that case, the main motif would be a conflict between truth and denial.

Another possibility is that Achilles could not bear the thought that he had killed this fascinating woman with his own hand. In this case, the feelings which torment him would be feelings of regret. This hypothesis has been advanced by Tyrrell: "Achilles kills Penthesileia—to discover someone he would marry." The term "marry" is out of place here,[1] but even if we interpret the passage to mean that Achilles regarded the Amazon as someone he would make love to, it still remains to be shown that this was serious enough to make Thersites' words unbearable.

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[1] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, p. 93. In the world of epic, however, his terminology creates a forced impression; indeed, the only possible reference to Penthesileia's nubile status in the *Aithopis* is the presence of her father Ares, who could give her away in marriage. Tyrrell's usage is more appropriate to the late Hellenistic world of Quintus Smyrnaeus, in which Achilles expresses his desire to take Penthesileia with him to Phthia as his [akoitis], *Posthomerica*, I, 671– 674. Briseis uses the same language in the *Iliad* in her lament for the death of Patroklos: "And yet you would not let me, when swift Achilles had cut down my husband [anèr], and sacked the city of godlike Mynes, you would not let me sorrow, but said you would make me godlike Achilles' wedded lawful wife [kouridiè alochos], that you would take me back in the ships to Phthia, and formalize my marriage among the Myrmidons", *Il.* XIX, 295–299; [alochos] and [akoitis] are equivalents. The distinction between "abduction" and "love" is made by Boardman in a comparison of the Antiope motif with that of Penthesileia: "Penthesileia had set the fashion for loveable Amazons in action", "Herakles, Theseus and Amazons", p. 8.

These explanations focus entirely on Achilles' passion for Penthesileia and explore the psychological dimension of his emotions from a modern point of view. With Romanticism behind us, our attention is held by the intertwining of those contradictory and complementary urges, Eros and Thanatos. In the wonderful adaptation of the motif by Heinrich von Kleist in his *Penthesilea* (1808), it is the Eros of the Amazon which drives her to her death.

Though it would be anachronistic to burden them with these Romantic connotations, some writers in late antiquity, such as Quintus Smyrnaeus, also concentrated on the proximity of Eros and Thanatos.[2] As late as the twelfth century, the Byzantine writer Tzetzes' *Posthomerica* (64–71) contains a description of the shield of Penthesileia, on which the Amazon herself appears flanked by her two patrons, Ares and Eros. However, it remains questionable whether these texts may be considered relevant for an understanding of the epic.[3]

The story of Penthesileia and the allegation that Achilles was smitten by [eroos] for her open up a range of possible interpretations. It is difficult to assess them properly because the summary version in the *Chrestomathia* invites modern reactions. The text actually conceals the main element of the theme. The fact that Achilles regards Thersites' words as abuse and mockery is treated as self-evident, but no indication is given of the nature of the mockery. All that the passage tells us is that Thersites says what may not be said. In short, we are offered a glimpse of a taboo, explicitly indicated and explicitly passed over. The only way to penetrate this silence is to consider the articulation of the context in more detail.

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[2] It is the posthumous beauty of Penthesileia which receives most attention. She is compared to the immortal goddesses and to Artemis in her sleep. Her beauty is the gift of no less a deity than Aphrodite, the spouse of Ares (*Posthomerica* I, 659–668).

[3] The loss of the text of the *Aithiopis* makes it impossible to determine to what extent Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica* reflects that earlier work. In an analysis and interpretation of Book I of the *Posthomerica*, R. Schmiel, "The Amazon Queen: Quintus of Smyrna, Book I", *Phoenix* 40, 1986, pp. 185–199 notes how Quintus' organization of the text reinforces the traditional division of labour (women indoors, war as a male prerogative). Schmiel assumes that this treatment of the Penthesileia motif is the work of Quintus and does not go back to the *Aithiopis*. The fact that Quintus did have recourse to later versions of the motif can be seen, for instance, from the mention of Penthesileia's accidental killing of her sister (I, 22– 25), and from the implicit condemnation of her taste for fighting, see also Schmiel, p. 189; in the Hellenistic age the martial nature of the Amazons was still an essential ingredient of their persona, but it was no longer a dominant or even respectable facet of their lives—times had changed since Aischylos. This element was displaced to the background by the erotic factor, as can be seen from the story of Alexandros the Great and Thalestris, as well as from Quintus' view of Penthesileia.

The version of this episode by Apollodoros (second century B.C., summarized in later résumés from the first and second centuries A.D.) is as follows:

> Penthesileia, daughter of Otrere and Ares, accidentally killed Hippolyte and was purified by Priamos. In battle she slew many, and amongst them Machaon, and was afterwards herself killed by Achilles, who fell in love with the Amazon after her death and slew Thersites for jeering at him. Hippolyte was the mother of Hippolytos, she also goes by the names of Glauke and Melanippe. For when the marriage of Phaidra was being celebrated, Hippolyte appeared in arms with her Amazons, and said that she would slay the guests of Theseus. So a battle took place, and she was killed, whether involuntarily by her ally Penthesileia, or by Theseus, or because his men, seeing the threatening attitude of the Amazons, hastily closed the doors and so intercepted and slew her.
>
> (*Epit.* V, 1–2; tr. Frazer)

This text is a combination of various traditions. The epic story of Achilles and Penthesileia has been expanded with the unintentional killing of Hippolyte and the purification performed by Priamos known from (late) Hellenistic texts.[4] Moreover, it is immediately connected with the story of Theseus, which developed from the end of the sixth century.[5] The episode of Theseus and Antiope serves to explain the presence of Penthesileia at Troy. The epic Amazon theme is therefore embedded in versions from a later period.

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[4] See too Diod. II, 46, 5; Quint. Sm. *Posthom.* I, 24ff; cf. Ch. IV, Priamos. Strabon reacts critically to Apollodoros' claims, and is irritated by the lack of clarity on the home of the Amazons (XII, 3, 21ff.). He is primarily concerned with Apollodoros' catalogue of Trojan allies, in which the Amazons appear. In geographical terms, the Amazons were by no means so far from Troy as to rule out their assistance with a military expedition. Besides, Strabon claimed, there was no reason for enmity between the two peoples (XII, 3, 24). The Homeric text cited by Strabon at this point is not the same as the current text of the *Iliad*: he conflates III, 187 and 189 replaces the verb [elechthèn] by [elegmèn]. It is unclear whether these differences are the result of careless citation on Strabon's part, or whether he was following another text.

[5] On the date and literature see my "Patronage and the Pisistratidae".

Apollodoros—or his reviser—has also given the Penthesileia motif a new twist. The most salient feature of her [aristeia] this time is the fact that she has killed many Achaians. The [eroos] motif has also undergone a change. In the older version, the [legomenos eroos] was itself the accusation, without making explicit why the accusation of [eroos] was in itself insulting. In the later version, however, the [eroos] is no longer a matter of malicious rumour, but it is a proven fact: Achilles realizes his passion for Penthesileia after she is dead. Thersites no longer occupies the central position as the figure who dares to utter the rumour in public, but as the person who taunts Achilles in love.

There is evidence to support the assumption that [eroos] had acquired a positive content by the Hellenistic and Roman era. F. Missonnier has demonstrated the emergence of an explicit interpretation of the [eroos] motif from the second century B.C., especially in the archaeological record.[6] In these sources, it forms part of a series of motifs which also appear in the Apollodoran version: the purification of Penthesileia, who goes to Troy in mourning; her death at the hands of Achilles; his passion for her, which is first referred to in the visual record around 460 B.C. by the motif of supporting her body in the fray;[7] and the theme of immortality, particularly with reference to Achilles. This series of motifs was a popular subject for sarcophagus decoration from this period down to the third century A.D. to illustrate the theme of the victory of Love over Death. In this connection, Achilles and Penthesileia form a pendant to Orpheus and Eurydike, Eros and Psyche, and Alkestis and Herakles. The significance of this series of motifs involves a new interpretation of traditional motifs: the epic [legomenos eroos]; the arrival of Penthesileia in Troy in mourning; and the iconographical pattern of Achilles supporting Penthesileia in battle.[8] Penthesileia's role as the deadly enemy of the Achaians has been replaced by the mutual [eroos] between her and Achilles.

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[6] F. Missonnier, "Sur la signification funéraire du mythe d'Achille et Penthésilée; à propos d'un fragment de bas-relief inédit", *MEFR*, 49, 1932, pp. 111–131.

[7] *LIMC* "Achilleus" no. 739.

[8] If A.T. Edwards, "Achilles in the Underworld: *Iliad*, *Odyssey* and *Aethiopis*," *GRBS* 28, 1985, pp. 215–227 is correct (his views are discussed below, p. 214), this Hellenistic notion of immortality is also a new interpretation of an ancient epic theme.

Thersites no longer has a genuine function in this series, and he is entirely absent from the sarcophagi. These Hellenistic representations of the Penthesileia story indicate a late stage in a process which was already under way in the classical period, where there are various indications that the figure of Thersites and the motif of his death were subjected to change. This can be seen on the first vase-painting of this theme (dating from around the middle of the fourth century),[9] which is probably based on a lost drama by Chairemon, the *Achilleus Thersitoktonos*.[10] This play deviated from the *Aithopis*, at least in details: Thersites was beheaded, and Diomedes played an important role.

A clearer indication of this change is provided by a passage from Sophokles' *Philoktetes* and the scholia on it. During the visit of Neoptolemos to Philoktetes, the latter asks about the fate of his fellow Achaians during the Trojan war. He asks about Aias, Nestor and others, until Neoptolemos remarks on Patroklos:

War does not willingly take
any evil man, but good men always.
Ph.: I bear you out in that. And that reminds me:
I will ask you about the present situation of a worthless man,
but one who was skilled of tongue and cunning.
N.: You cannot mean anyone by that except Odysseus?
Ph.: I did not mean him. There was, though, a Thersites who, in spite
of everyone's reluctance to permit him speech, was never content
to speak once and be finished. Do you know if he happens to be living?
N.: I did not see him myself, but I heard he was alive.
Ph.: He would be. For nothing evil was ever yet destroyed,
but the gods well protect them and by some means take pleasure
in diverting from Hades the villains and the knaves.
But they always despatch the just and good there.
(436–450)[11]

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[9] The first representations of the killing of Thersites by Achilles date from ca. 350–340 B.C., *LIMC* "Achilleus" no. 794.

[10] See Snell, *TrGF* 71, F 1 a-c, 2, 3.

[11] Translation by R.G. Ussher, *Sophocles' Philoctetes*, Warminster, 1990.

A later scholiast on this passage pointed out an incongruity: the assumption that Thersites was still alive at the time of action of the *Philoktetes* is at odds with the story of his death in the *Aithiopis*:

> This is in conflict with the tradition. For it is said that he [Thersites] was killed by Achilles at the time when the latter killed Penthesileia. For after Penthesileia had been killed by Achilles, Thersites pierced her eye with a spear; enraged, Achilles killed him with his bare hands. For it was said that he had lusted after her and had intercourse with her after her death.

According to this scholiast, Penthesileia's corpse was penetrated twice: first sexually by Achilles; and second by Thersites' piercing of her eye. If we now compare this version with that preserved in epic, we may note a heightened and more tangible presentation of the conflict. Thersites' reputation rested on his [kaka] *words*, according to Sophokles and to the scholion on line 443,[12] but the scholion on line 445, as well as the vase-painting based on Chairemon's play, replace this by base *action*. Likewise, the accusation of [eroos], which was sufficient to rouse Achilles to a frenzy in the epic, has undergone a similar metamorphosis: now Achilles' honour is besmirched with an accusation that is in flagrant conflict with social and religious values, viz. the allegation that he has had intercourse with Penthesileia's corpse. Apparently the need had arisen to exacerbate the accusation against Achilles and the unacceptable actions of Thersites in order to explain why the latter had been put to death. Thersites has now become a mean character of a different kind, who is credited with a series of crimes. At the same time, he becomes detached from the other motifs in their new form: the purification; the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia (with the theme of providing support for her body); and the motif of the victory of [eroos] over death.

These metamorphoses suggest that the original story had become more difficult to understand, at least in part. In order to understand the Penthesileia motif, we must therefore start with the figure of Thersites. After all, his words play a crucial role.[13]

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[12] "He liked to say again and again what was unpleasant to hear once."

[13] Two terms are used in the passage from the *Chrestomathia* to refer to Thersites' verbal aggression: [loidoreo]: abuse, mock (classical and later); and [oneidizo]: mock, revile (also Homeric).

That he fulfils an essential role in the epic can also be seen from the reaction to his death, for the entire Achaian force is divided [stasis] by the killing of this figure at the hands of the best of the Achaians. Furthermore, his metamorphosis from slanderer to villain and his gradual disappearance from the Penthesileia motif run parallel to the metamorphosis of the [eroos] motif from an unspeakable taboo to a celebration of immortality.

Besides his role in the *Aithiopis*, Thersites plays an important part in *Iliad* II, 212ff. His allegations of inadequate leadership by Agamemnon threaten to bring about an enormous conflict, and Odysseus has great difficulty in averting it. Although Thersites is presented as an unattractive character of low social standing, he is able to speak and command the attention of all for a while. How are we to account for his importance? Quintus Smyrnaeus offers an implicit explanation for the importance of Thersites by presenting him as a relative by blood of Diomedes, who vows to take vengeance on Achilles after his fatal impulsive act.[14] This idea has been taken over by J. Ebert, who has suggested that Thersites was originally a fallen aristocrat.[15] Ebert's endeavour to explain why a detestable figure like Thersites was nevertheless allowed to address a noble audience is one of the many attempts to explain the figure of Thersites in terms of socio-historical factors which were reflected in the literary epic.[16]

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[14] *Posthom.* I, 741–781. The accusations levelled by Thersites occupy eighteen lines (723–740), while his punishment and the revenge of Diomedes occupy forty- one. The beauty of Penthesileia, on the other hand, receives only a total of sixteen (I, 56–61 and 659– 668). In quantitative terms at least, emphasis is on the conflict with Thersites and the [stasis] rather than on the charms of the Amazon queen.

[15] J. Ebert, "Die Gestalt des Thersites in der *Ilias*", *Philologus*, 113, 1969, pp. 159–175.

[16] N. Postlethwaite, "Thersites in the *Iliad* ", *G&R* 35, 1988, pp. 123–136 and especially the excellent article by W.G. Thalmann, "Thersites: Comedy, Scapegoats, and Heroic Ideology in the *Iliad*", *TAPA* 118, 1988, pp. 1–28, describe and refute these socio- historical interpretations of the passage in *Iliad* II. They are defended, on the other hand, by P.W. Rose, "Thersites and the Plural Voices of Homer", *Arethusa* 21, 1988, pp. 5–25 and, most influentially, by M.I. Finley, who regards Thersites' activity as a form of resistance by the lower classes to the upper classes: "Menelaus could no more have challenged Thersites to an oath than a Prussion Junker could have challenged a Berlin shopkeeper to a duel", *The World of Odysseus*, London 1977^2, pp. 110–111. The comparison is an elegant illustration of the connection between honour and status, but I do not think we should cast Thersites in the role of a Berlin shopkeeper. For a more extensive argument

These various interpretations of Thersites as the literary reflection of some socio-historical reality leave a number of questions unanswered. From the text of the *Iliad* it would appear that Thersites does not have a patronymic, which is a virtually unique occurrence and which clearly distinguishes him from the [basileis]. All the same, he engages time and again in verbal skirmishes with the leading commanders, and his death (in the *Aithiopis*) is sufficient to divide the Achaian army and to call for a formal purification of the killer. It is difficult to see in him a representative of people of common status in view of the importance which he is accorded by all. The passage from the *Philoktetes* and the scholion on 443 provide a clear-cut portrait of Thersites among the leading aristocratic figures, not by emphasising any lower social status but by stressing the vengeance which his words provoke.

The passage from *Iliad* II has always held a central position in the debate on the figure of Thersites, while the two other sources—the *Aithiopis* and the *Philoktetes*—have been ignored or simply treated as echoes of the Homeric text. It remains to be seen whether this is correct. If we take seriously the generally accepted view that the *Iliad* is an exceptional product of a large tradition, which survives only in fragments apart from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, this entails consequences for the interpretation of Thersites. The oldest sources—the *Iliad* and the *Aithiopis*—and the *Philoktetes* offer a consistent image of Thersites. He addresses the [basileis] as his equals, but he constantly says what may not be said. His role consists primarily of what he says. If we assume that this characterisation contains the fixed elements of Thersites' role in the traditional stories, we can regard the *Iliad*, the *Aithiopis* and the perhaps the *Philoktetes* too as containing different interpretations of this tradition. This means that we are dependent on the scene in *Iliad* II for a more detailed account of Thersites' words.

Thersites is called an immoderate talker [a-metro-epès] in the *Iliad* (II, 212): his words lack the right measure. Another deprecatory *hapax legomenon* referring to his speech is [koloiao], "screamed, bawled". In the following lines, his words are lacking in order

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on Thersites' role as a common man see H. van Wees, *Status Warriors. War, Violence and Society in Homer and History*, Amsterdam 1992, pp. 78ff.. The author explains the effect of Thersites' words, but misrepresents my point of view, p. 353.

[a-kosma], and display a complete lack of decorum [kosmos] in disagreeing [eris] with the [basileis]. He generally attacks Odysseus and Achilles, i.e. the best. His words provoke mirth (215) and resentment [nemesis] (223). In short, whereas everyone knows the proper order [kosmos] of the world, namely that embodied and represented by the aristocrats, Thersites deliberately or unwittingly contravenes this code. His words are an anomaly in this system; his activities are treated as "lacking form", and meet with mirth or resentment.

This all suggests that the figure of Thersites was assigned a regular role as a querulous person in epic. According to G. Nagy, who is concerned with the structure of the whole tradition, both the action of Thersites and the language he uses are expressions of blame-poetry, a genre related to iambic poetry. The figures and settings in this poetry are always pathetic and down to earth, and the amusement is always at someone's expense.[17] As epics of praise, he argues, the *Iliad* and the *Aithiopis* have both incorporated the poetry of blame in the narrative structure. Despite the value of this insight, it is only relevant to a limited extent, for it fails to explain why only a single person appears as a representative of this blame-poetry in large-scale works like the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, and in the *Philoktetes* it is still Thersites alone who is credited with this role.

We can gain a better idea of the specific function of Thersites by comparing him with two other figures from narrative traditions. The legendary Greek teller of fables Aisopos also criticised morals and practices in his stories. Eventually he was killed by the Delphians, who were treated to yet another provocative parable as he went to meet his execution. In the tradition Aisopos is a man of humble origins—a slave, a Thrakian, physically deformed, or a combination of these characteristics. He was an outsider whose sharp words were primarily directed at ordinary folk.[18] Aisopos was credited with having said to Solon, a fellow guest at the court of Kroisos, that one should either avoid monarchs altogether or only tell them what they like to hear.[19] The other figure with whom it is instructive to compare Thersites is that of the ritual clown,[20] as we know it from the Indian tradition.[21] In Sanskrit drama this figure became the *viduçaka*, i.e. mocker, spoiler. The *viduçaka* is represented as a jester-like figure who is deformed and strangely dressed. Nevertheless, he is the only one who may approach the king as an equal and address him as a friend. His role is an integrated part of the drama; he has the confidence of the king, but as a result of his simple-mindedness and his inability to hold his tongue, he causes problems and delays or spoils the happy ending. F.B.J. Kuiper has demonstrated that the close, primarily entertaining relations between the *viduçaka* and the king on stage go back to an interaction between equals and a genuine antagonism between them.[22] In the South Indian tradition, with its unmistakable Sanskrit elements, the role of the king and the clown are so closely interrelated that the appearance and the properties of one of them are extremely closely connected with those of the other; indeed, they may virtually overlap, as D.D. Shulman has shown.[23] The clown in his earthly, comic shape is the complement to the elevated figure of the monarch, and their inextricable interrelation to one another is an expression of the cosmos.

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[17] G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans. Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*, Baltimore/London 1979, pp. 259ff.

[18] See B.E. Perry, ed. *Aesopica. A Series of Texts Relating to Aesop or Ascribed to Him or Closely Connected with the Literary Tradition that Bears His Name*, Urbana 1952, vol. I, pp. 73–77, p. 105. Cf. Ar. *Vespae*, 1446. I am indebted to J.N. Bremmer for drawing my attention to this parallel.

Both Thersites (at least in the *Iliad*) and Aisopos are punished for airing unpopular views, but Aisopos' attitude to aristocrats is essentially different from that of Thersites, who is closer to the Indian clown in this respect:[24] his ridiculous appearance, accompanied by his right to address nobility, his continual venting of aggression against the [basileis] and his talent to give the course of events a painful twist by his [kakos] words. Even though he is not the confidant of the [basileis], he is completely familiar with their mode of behaviour and reveals a painfully accurate insight into their personal motives. The *viduçaka* is more of a comic fool who is at most the cause of derision because of his antics, but if we follow the analyses by Kuiper and Shulman, behind this theatrical clown lies a more serious intent: the struggle between positive and negative powers in kingship. In the end, then, the Indian ritual clown—the alter ego of the king—is left intact. Thersites is both ridiculous and openly malicious; the *Iliad* presents him as a despicable individual. We have seen three kinds of reaction to his words after the laughter has died away: he is beaten by Odysseus with the staff which now functions as a token of kingship and driven out of the circle as a scapegoat (*Iliad*);[25] Achilles beats him to death (*Aithiopis*); or he is still alive and will even outlive the [basileis] through divine favour (*Philoktetes*). In terms of my hypothesis, the version in the *Philoktetes* is closest to the tradition in this respect: Thersites is a structural ingredient in the heroic story. He is the alter ego of the superior protagonists, and his words are the negative mirror image of heroic speech. It is certainly plausible that some form of (ritual) expulsion or punishment was included in this tradition.

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[19] Plut. *Solon*, 28; Diod. IX, 28.

[20] For an excellent portrait of the ritual clown in Pueblo culture see B. Babcock, "Pueblo Clowning and Pueblo Clay: from Icon to Caricature in Cochiti Figurative Ceramics, 1875–1900", in *Visible Religion*, vol. IV–V, *Approaches to Iconology*, Leiden 1985–1986, pp. 280–300. Babcock's analysis clearly shows the integrated function of the ritual clown, but unlike his counterpart in the Indian material discussed below, the Pueblo clown does not have an aristocratic character.

[21] The following remarks are based on F.B.J. Kuiper, *Varuna and Viduçaka. On the Origin of Sanskrit Drama*, Amsterdam/Oxford 1979, pp. 199–210.

[22] Kuiper explains the role of the viduçaka on the basis of the Vedic "verbal contest" between Indra and Varuna, with a ritual background aimed at "a reiteration of the cosmogony and [. . . .] a renewal of life." Kuiper, *Viduçaka*, p. 210.

[23] D.D. Shulman, *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth and Poetry*, Princeton 1985. Shulman entitles his characterisation of the viduçaka "Losing the Illusion", p. 155.

[24] It is tempting to see more in this parallelism and to think in terms of

These parallels indicate that Thersites' role is determined by the function of his words.[26] Like every social and ethical code, the complex of values and behaviour of the epic heroes is never uncontested. By way of illustration, let us consider the context of the scene in *Iliad* II. The aristocratic [timè], the reward in goods and people acquired through the display of bravery, functions within a code of honour, but it is also a valued and desirable possession. The attribution of honour, the recognition

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a borrowing, for example from a common, more ancient tradition. One should tread warily, however, since the religious ethic of the Sanskrit texts cannot be compared with the Greek cosmology and ethic without further ado. The *viduçaka* himself never features in dramas with an epic content, Kuiper, *Viduçaka*, p. 211.

[25] *Il.* II, 265–277. See Thalmann, "Thersites".

[26] One might even speculate to what extent his wrangles with the various [basileis] recall the verbal contest. On the social and ethical background to this behaviour, see Van Wees, *Status Warriors*, Ch. III.

of the person who excels in battle, the division of the spoils, in short the social conditions and effects of the warrior ethic, remain the butt of social criticism. In their competition to be [aristoi], the strongest present their claims to [timè] in as favourable a light as possible. The less successful candidates are displaced to the background, while in the verbal justification of honour and leadership, which is vested in eloquence in public speaking, everything that is wrong or undesirable is glossed over as much as possible. It is this repressed, underlying layer which Thersites brings to the surface. In terms of the aristocratic moral code, he puts into words precisely what has to be hidden from sight. This aspect—voicing the reverse of the moral code desired by the elite—is the essence of Thersites' role. After all, he is not accused of [phthonos], but of uttering improper [a-kosma] words which lead to [eris] and [nemesis]. Whether he is telling the truth or not is beside the point. Truth is here situated at the level of words, interpretation and force of conviction. These words are the truth, they create the experienced reality, just as the fame of the heroes consists of what is said about them rather than of what they have actually done.[27] No doubt Thersites speaks in the *Iliad* as a representative of the losers, the minority. All the same, it is probably symptomatic that the rank and file of the army do not identify with him. Although Thersites voices the critical opinions which the men might entertain, after his punishment they react by joining in his condemnation, confirming the supremacy of the [basileis] and implicitly denying that he has spoken on their behalf.[28] Moreover, Thersites has attempted to spur the Achaian warriors on to resistance by insulting them as well: he taunts them with being women (II, 235).[29] As the sole critic of the aristocrats, Thersites is not on the side of the [basileis], but he is not one the side of the ordinary people either. He remains an outsider—he can be the object of derision or even punishment, but killing him (as in the *Aithiopis*) leads to [stasis].

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[27] P.V. Jones, "The KLEOS of Telemachus", *AJPh* 109, 1988, pp. 496–506.

[28] Finley cites the thoughts which the crowd of spectators is supposed to have had at the punishment of Thersites, (*Il.* II, 211–78), concluding with the words: "'Hardly, I think, will his [Thersites'] heart again bid him rail at kings with words of reproach.' So spoke the multitude". Those final words, 'so spoke the multitude", protest too much. It is as if the poet himself felt that he had overdrawn the contrast. Do not think I talk from an aristocratic bias—that is the sense of the last four words." Finley, *The World of Odysseus*, pp. 111–112. Finley therefore identifies a third point of view here, that of the poet of the *Iliad*; but this must be distinguished from the words which are put into the mouths of Thersites, Odysseus, and the army.

[29] Cf. above, pp. 170–171.

The most consistent datum is Thersites' riposte within the world of the rulers, and the entire material—the *Iliad*, the *Aithiopis* and the *Philoktetes*—can be understood better if we assume that Thersites *always* answers the [aristoi] back (as we are explicitly told in the *Iliad*).[30] In this connection it is highly significant that Thersites' words echo the words of Achilles in his dispute with Agamemnon.[31] Then Achilles turns against the most prominent [basileus], for very different reasons to those of Thersites, and refers in the presence of the army to all of Agamemnon's infringements of the code of honour. Achilles is an [aristos]; in fact, he is *the* [aristos]. That is certainly not true of Thersites. Nevertheless, the fact that Thersites' words are analogous to those of Achilles in the *Iliad* can still be taken as an indication of the traditional, structural function of Thersites' role.

If the weight of his words really is determined by this role, it becomes easier to understand what we are to make of Thersites' accusations against Achilles in the *Aithiopis*. As we have seen, the ambiguity of the Amazons lies in the fact that they are both heroic [aristoi] and women. We have also seen that a woman can only be understood *in opposition to* a man in a relationship of [eroos], which is out of place on the field of battle. True to his role, Thersites seizes upon this ambiguity, which cannot be tolerated within the heroic world. He sees Achilles and Penthesileia—a man and a woman—and from his point of view there is only one way of viewing their relationship: [eroos]. This is by definition only a part of the truth, and a part which is *wrong or undesirable*. The dominant code—the worldview of the [basileis] -, in which the Amazons are warriors equivalent to men in battle, is shown to be one-sided and incomplete. Achilles senses that he is under attack and reacts accordingly. Thersites has represented him at less than his true worth.

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[30] Cf. Postlethwaite, "Thersites" and Thalmann, "Thersites".

[31] This was pointed out earlier, though in a less extensive demonstration than Postlethwaite's, by A. Parry, "Have we Homer's *Iliad*?" p. 194, who refers for brevity's sake to C.H. Whitman, *Homer and the Homeric Tradition*, Cambridge Mass. 1958, 1967^2. Whitman's thesis concerns the symmetrical geometrical structure on which the *Iliad* is supposed to be constructed; on this reading, the words of Thersites form a symmetrical counterpart to those of Achilles. Even if one does not accept Whitman's thesis as a whole (see below, p. 246 n. 139), he is still right in pointing out this verbal parallelism. In my view, this parallelism is an indication of the structural position of Thersites' point of view in the epic material. Cf. R.P. Martin, *The Language of Heroes. Speech and Performance in the Iliad*. Ithaca/London, pp. 109–112, 135.

The point of the accusation now acquires a new meaning. It is not scandalous for a hero to feel [eroos] for a woman. Even [eroos] for a woman who is physically a match for men may be exceptional, but given the victory of the man, it is not necessarily dishonourable.[32] In the case of Achilles and Penthesileia there is thus an unusual problem at stake, which calls for a specific explanation. This might lie in the fact that everything takes place after the death of Penthesileia. The scandalous nature of Achilles' [eroos] would then be due to the fact that its object was *dead*.[33] Alternatively, it might be supposed that the undesirable element is the fact that the [eroos] is felt for an *enemy*. Though both of these suggestions will undoubtedlty have contributed to the understanding of the motif, they do not touch on the main issue. The killing of Thersites indicates that his words were so much in conflict with the epic norms that Achilles was deeply insulted and overwhelmed by resentment at the assault on his honour. The two suggestions above fail to explain this degree of conflict. Penthesileia was and remained an enemy, but what importance did this have after her death? Was Thersites calling Achilles' manliness into question, as he had done with the Achaian warriors?

Our interpretation of the role of Thersites in epic offers the basis for a more fundamental explanation. Thersites' essentially critical function leads to the supposition that it is not the individual Amazon that is at stake, but a complex of values represented by her, or even by the confrontation between Achilles and her. Likewise, as regards Achilles' [mènis] in the *Iliad*, it is not the relation between the individuals Agamemnon and Achilles which is at stake, but their function within the heroic code of battle and honour. The same code which prohibits this [eroos] has created the figure of Thersites to draw attention to this conflict. If we are to understand precisely where the problem lies, we must discover more about the values which are threatened by this [eroos]. This involves paying closer attention to the position and figure of the female protagonist in the epic and later, primarily iconographical tradition. Only afterwards will be able to return to the interpretation of the motif comprising Thersites, Achilles and Penthesileia.

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[32] This can be seen from the story of Atalante's race. The earliest testimonia for this myth are from the *Catalogue of Women* attributed to Hesiodos, *FrHes* M&W nos. 72, 73, 74, 76 (with emendations).

[33] This factor facilitated the interpretation of the motif discussed by Missonnier; the words [kai meta thanaton], after death, came to lead a life of their own in this interpretation, "Sur la signification funéraire", pp. 118ff.

The creation of Penthesileia

The poet of the *Iliad* describes the Amazons as a female people who are equivalent to men in battle. The epic formula [Amazones antianeirai] indicates that the Amazons entered the world of epic as a group. Suddenly—according to the summary of the *Aithiopis*[34]— Penthesileia, queen of the Amazons, appears on the scene in an individual role. The Greek warriors who appear as individual protagonists in the Trojan war are accompanied by their own people, but it has been argued that they were created as individuals in the epic, where each of them occupies a typical function.[35] Is Penthesileia also derived from her group, a figure who has been isolated from her people and magnified to be able to play a major role? And if so, what takes place during this process? What data may cast some light on the development of the Penthesileia motif?

The formula only presents the Amazons in the plural, but the introduction of Penthesileia calls for a singular form [Amazoon]. There is an example of this singular form in a line of epic:

> "some write:
> Such was their burial of Hektor, breaker of horses.
> or
> And now there came an Amazon
> daughter of great-hearted Ares, slayer of men."

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[34] See above, pp. 195–196.

[35] West, "The Rise of the Greek Epic", pp. 161ff. He distinguishes eight characters (Protesilaos, Philoktetes, Odysseus, Lokrian Aias, Kalchas, the sons of Asklepios, and Nestor), who are essential to the plot, and the major warriors (Achilles, Diomedes, Aias son of Telamon).

"tines graphousin:
hoos hoi g'amphiepon taphon Hektoros {hippodamoio
{èlthe d' **Amazoon**
Arèos thugatèr megalètoros androphonoio."
(Schol. *Il.* XXIV, 804; T)

These lines indicate how the conclusion of the extant *Iliad* could be altered to bring about a smooth transition to the episode with the Amazons.[36] The first line indicates that the scholiast was able to compare different versions, including that of the extant *Iliad*, since the first ending to the line corresponds to the end of book XXIV of the *Iliad*. There was a text, however, which did not end with the burial of Hektor, but passed on immediately to the story of the intervention of Penthesileia and her Amazons in the Trojan war. There were thus different versions of the epic narratives, and the material covering the long story of the siege and fall of Troy was distributed among these texts in more than one way. This raises problems for the understanding of the relation between these written texts and the oral tradition on which they draw.

Homeric scholars have already debated the connection between the *Iliad* and the *Aithiopis* extensively.[37] An example of the neoanalytic approach is provided by the interpretation advanced by E.Chr. Kopff.[38] On the basis of literary and iconographical evidence, he arrives at the following reconstruction. The original version, the *Aithiopis*, called "H" by Kopff to distinguish it from the summary by Proclus, contained the death and burial of Hektor, the Penthesileia episode (later known as the *Amazoneia*), and the Memnon episode up to and including the death of Aias. A different version branched off from "H". This version, which he calls "C", was frequently interpolated. "C" began with the arrival of Penthesileia and came to contain the episodes now listed in the test of the *Chrestomathia*. This "C" version thus took the existence of the *Iliad* into account, and no longer included the story of the death and burial of Hektor which now conclude the extant *Iliad*.

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[36] On similar transitional lines at the beginning or end of various works attributed (correctly or not) to Hesiodos, see Huxley, *Greek Epic Poetry*, p. 147.

[37] For example, see the discussion of this literature in Edwards, "Achilles in the Underworld: *Iliad*, *Odyssey* and *Aethiopis*," pp. 219–220.

[38] E. Chr. Kopff, "The Structure of the *Amazonia* (*Aethiopis*), in R. Hägg, ed. *The Greek Renaissance of the Eighth Century B.C. Tradition and Innovation*, Stockholm 1983, pp. 57–62.

Kopff attributes great importance to the following items in his reconstruction. First, the Penthesileia episode—her arrival in Troy, her [aristeia] and her death—occupied a proper position in the epic narrative structure. Second, the end of Book XXIV of the *Iliad* can be better understood as a scene which introduced this episode: a new (female) warrior appears on the Trojan side after the death of Hektor. The second ending to the hexameter mentioned by scholion T would thus belong to the "H" version, where it marked neither the end of Book XXIV nor the beginning of the *Aithiopis*, but was situated in the middle of the story of the arrival of Penthesileia. The chronological sequence of the epics, according to Kopff, is "H", *Iliad*, "C".

Kopff supports these arguments with a brief analysis of the thematic parallelism between the *Iliad* and the *Aithiopis*.[39] In both epics new opponents are successively introduced who confront one another on the field of battle until one of them is killed to the greater glory of both victor and vanquished. Many scholars have already noticed this parallelism—thematic analysis does indeed reveal a striking correspondence between the two epics[40]—and have concluded that the *Iliad* is structured by analogy with, and is thus dependent on, the *Aithiopis*. The argument as a whole implies that the *Aithopis* is older than the *Iliad*, as is also indicated by Kopff's stemma. Since Penthesileia forms a part of this representation of the *Aithiopis*, she is also taken to have belonged to the early epic creations.

However, certain objections may be raised to Kopff's argument. Within his neo-analytical perspective, all epic narratives are regarded as clearly defined, virtually written texts whose fixed formulations can be studied, utilised or adapted by later authors. Recent research on oral literature has made this position untenable.[41]

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[39] On the nature of this parallelism and its possible significance, see below, p. 241ff.

[40] See e.g. H. Pestalozzi, *Die Achilleïs als Quelle der Ilias*, Erlenbach/Zürich 1945; J. Kakridis, *Homeric Researches*, Lund 1949; idem, *Homer Revisited*, Lund 1971; G. Schoeck, *Ilias und Aethiopis. Kyklische Motive in Homerischer Brechung*, Zürich 1961.

[41] A. Dihle, *Homer-Probleme*, Opladen 1970, Chs. I and II; and see too Edwards, "Achilles", p. 220 n.11.

As has already been pointed out, the themes and structure of the epic narratives in the (early) archaic period must be understood primarily as oral creations. A fixed form gradually emerges under the influence of the use of writing. It is precisely this intervention of writing and its consequences that is the subject of major debate. Since there is no consensus at all on the dating of the written text of the *Iliad*,[42] it not possible to present cogent arguments from this perspective either.

We can be sure, however, that the intervention of writing has resulted in an illusion: the idea of clearly defined segments from the whole narrative corpus, containing a fixed form and content complete with author and title, such as the *Iliad*, the *Aithiopis*, a *Memnonis*, or an *Achilleis*, is a distortion of reality. Divisions of this kind are not settled once and for all in an oral tradition, and certainly not in this way. The relatively constant factors in an oral tradition are the social function and the structure of a "text", not the alleged author or the version that is finally recorded in writing.[43] The archaic Greek tradition well illustrates this phenomenon. Not only Arktinos but also Homeros was referred to as the author of the *Aithiopis*,[44] and the *Aithiopis* is not the only work to be attributed to Arktinos: both he and Eumelos were credited with the authorship of the *Titanomachia*, the second poem in the cycle. This variation in attribution illustrates the lack of familiarity with the nature of authorship and the creative process involved in oral epic on the part of later critics.[45]

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[42] The traditional date in the eight century has already been contested by M.L. West, who has argued for a date for the recording of the *Iliad* in writing around the middle of the seventh century. On the basis of comparative material, Minna S. Jensen has offered new, though hardly convincing arguments for a date in the sixth century, *The Homeric Question and the Oral-Formulaic Theory*, Copenhagen 1980. For a critical review of the problems involved, see S. West, "Sul testo dell' Odissea", in A. Heubeck and S. West, eds. *Omero. Odissea*, vol. I, libri I–IV, Rome 1981 pp. xli– lix, and above, p. 185ff.

[43] J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition. A Study in Historical Methodology*, Harmondsworth 1973^2, esp. pp. 144ff.

[44] There is a brief survey of the ancient attributions in *OCD*, s.v. "Epic Cycle" (West).

[45] Jensen, *The Homeric Question*, passim has shown that a small number of often fictive names of the "original" singers of the "authentic" narrative circulate in an oral tradition. Other singers claim not to depart from this "authorized" version. The names of the master singers are emblematic; they should not be taken to be indications of authorship as we understand it. She therefore proposes to regard "Homeros" and "Arktinos" as collective authors.

Kopff's versions "H", *Iliad* and "C" may thus be synchronic, equivalent selections from the narrative corpus. Terms like "Urtext" and "derivation" are thus inappropriate to describe the relations between the narrative themes. This objection, however, in no way diminishes the importance of the thematic parallelism. On the contrary, although it should not be considered as a narrative structure which has passed from one text into another, the two narratives are unmistakably related to one another because they are constructed from the same traditional themes. The likely sequence of narrative segments is thus no criterium in itself for the succession of the episodes contained in the narratives, nor can this sequence be used to derive a development of the Penthesileia motif. It is the structure of the narrative, the way in which it is formulated, and the illustrations relating to this motif which enable us to reconstruct this narrative.

A reconstruction of this type has been attempted by A.T. Edwards in relation to a specific theme: the posthumous fate of Achilles.[46] In the *Aithiopis* Achilles is taken to the island Leukè (White Island), which implies that he becomes immortal. In the *Iliad*, however, he lives among the ghosts of the underworld, while both traditions seem to be present in the *Odyssey*. Distinguishing between different traditions and the extant written versions, Edwards argues that the motif of immortality goes back to Mykenaian-Minoan belief. In that case, the tradition from which the *Aithiopis* emerged includes an older stratum of the epic tradition than that of the *Iliad*, while the *Odyssey* occupies a successive position. These conclusions resemble those drawn by Kakridis and Pestalozzi as well as displaying some points of contact with those of Kopff, but the argumentation takes more account of the nature of oral poetry.

The perspective represented by scholars like West and Edwards is also an assault on the historicizing premises of the neo-analytical approach, which assigns great importance to qualitative change (either as evolution toward perfection or as degeneration to epigonism).[47] As a result of the embedding of evaluation of

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It is certainly not impossible that the names belonged to historical individuals, but it is impossible to establish a firm connection between name and individual.

[46] Edwards, "Achilles in the Underworld".

[47] On the debate between Whallon and Kirk, see above, p. 185. For a brief

controversies relating to epic in a linear development, each qualitative judgement necessarily implies a chronological judgement as well. The differences within oral poetry detected by scholars like West and Edwards, on the other hand, relate to an extension and recognition of variety in these traditions, independently of value judgements on the literary quality of the traditions themselves.

This difference in approach can be illustrated from the controversy between Edwards and Dihle. According to A. Dihle, the epithet [megalètoor], which is found in the second line of the scholion on *Iliad* XXIV, 804 cited above, is not an epithet of Ares in the narrative tradition to which the *Iliad* belongs. In that case, [Arèos megalètoros] must derive from a different source. Dihle asserts that the formula belongs to a later period of epic narrative.[48] In view of the close semantic connection between the two lines in question, it is reasonable to assume that a judgement on the formula [Arèos megalètoros] also bears on the rest of the sentence, and thus on the [Amazoon] who is the [thugatèr] of Ares.[49]

Such a later dating is in conflict with Edwards' view of the material from the *Aithiopis*, for if the sentence referring to the Amazon belonged to this material, it would imply that the Penthesileia motif is as old as the immortality motif to which it belongs, and thus predates the *Iliad*.[50] In his comments on Dihle's analyses, Edwards contests the latter's assumption that the final version of the Epic Cycle was derived from the *Iliad*. Although I am in agreement with Edwards' position, it is not sufficient grounds for acceptance or rejection of Dihle's verdict on the date of the formulation in the scholion.[51] Despite the differences between them, Dihle and Edwards are agreed on one point: the *Iliad*

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discussion of the problem see my "De Homerische epen tussen oraliteit en schriftcultuur".

[48] Dihle, *Homer-Probleme*, p. 43. Neither Dihle nor other scholars have paid attention to the phrase [èlthe d'Amazoon].

[49] This is not necessarily the case, as formulae, and particularly those consisting of a proper name plus an epithet, function as autonomous elements within oral poetry.

[50] Edwards, "Achilles in the Underworld", p. 219, n.10; he rejects Kopff's reconstruction on the same grounds, p. 220, n.11.

[51] On the complexities of the chronology of the formulae, see above, p. 185ff. In a discussion with Finkelberg, Edwards himself remarked that an understanding of oral poetry is not enough in itself to provide anchor-points for the dating of formulae.

and the *Aithiopis* represent different traditions within hexameter poetry, even though this does not tell us anything about the relative dates of the final versions of these two epics themselves. If it becomes possible to determine to which tradition the Penthesileia episode belongs, a reconstruction of the motif gradually begins to emerge.

Bearing these considerations in mind, we can now turn to the question of whether the descriptions "of Thrakian [genos]" and "daughter of Ares" are a summary of what was told in the original text, or whether the origin and descent of Penthesileia were confined to these summary details from the first. There is no indication that the author of the *Chrestomathia* has altered the content of the poem, while the volume of the version cited by Proclus can only be estimated. If each of the five books were as long as an average book of the *Iliad*, viz. approx. 570 lines, the *Aithiopis* as described in the *Chrestomathia* must have been approx. 3,500 to 4,000 lines in length.[52] This leaves little room for an extensive description of Penthesileia in the original *Aithiopis* if the poet still had to recount the story of the conflict with Thersites, the [aristeia] of Memnon, the death of Achilles, the fight over his dead body, and the quarrel between Odysseus and Aias.[53]

The two aspects of Penthesileia deviate from the Amazon passages in the *Iliad* in a number of ways. As we have seen, the narrative chronology of both passages excludes the Amazons from the present: they belong to the past, and only survive in name.[54] Moreover, all that these passages state about the Amazons is that they are "equivalent to men" and had fought with Priamos and Bellerophontes; there is no reference to location, origin, or anything else. "Of Thrakian [genos]", on the other hand, links Penthesileia with a familiar area, situated relatively close to Troy. The god of war, Ares, who is here featured for the first time as the father of the Amazons, was also a familiar figure to the storytellers and their audience; indeed, he personified the violence of war which was the theme of the epic.[55] While the reference to "Thrake" sets the Amazons close to the scene of the action, the genealogical motif in the descent from Ares incorporates the Amazons in the cultural world of the Greeks. This close proximity to the centre of the Greek narrators in location and descent is also present in the narrative chronology of the episode under consideration: Penthesileia appears in the midst of the battle before Troy, she confronts Achilles as her opponent, and she engages in combat with him. The fact that this proximity is only relative, i.e. that this is a Greek interpretation of the motif which will nevertheless situate the Amazons on the boundary of the Greek cultural world, is discussed in more detail below.

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[52] Compare 6,600 lines for the *Oidipoidia*, 7,000 for the *Thebais*, 7,000 for the *Epigonoi*, 11 books for the *Kypria*, 4 books for the *Ilias Parva*, and 2 books for the *Iliou Persis* (figures based on the short introduction in *OCD* s.v. "Epic Cycle" (M.L. West) and on Davies' edition of the fragments). The length of each of these "songs" is much closer to the average length of a song in oral delivery than the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, cf. A.B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, 1960, pp. 152–157. This difference makes it all the more important to apply caution in the comparison of the *Iliad* with the poems from the Epic Cycle. Moreover, since only a number of lines or a number of books is provided for each of these works, the conversion of the number of lines into the number of books is a tentative process, for the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the only epics for which we have both figures. There is a wide variation in the number of lines per book in these epics, so use of an average figure is a potentially unreliable procedure. My estimate for the *Aithiopis* is a modest one.

[53] The two other testimonia, *EGF* ed. Davies, nos. 3 i and ii, imply a similar schematic and summary structure for the *Aithiopis*.

[54] See further below, Ch. IV.

This characterisation of Penthesileia, supported by the narrative movement, brings the Amazons much closer into focus than the passages from the *Iliad* did. An attempt is clearly being made to give the Amazons a clear-cut identity in terms of location and descent. The course taken by the narrative in the episode of Achilles and Penthesileia reflects a desire to give the Amazon motif a more specific function in the epic material. This apparently required the addition of a more specific interpretation: location and descent fill in the outline and flesh out a different image which was presumably felt to be too sketchy. The brief description of Penthesileia in the *Aithiopis* should primarily be understood as a development of the motif which succeeded a more ancient and imprecise version.

As for the name [Penthesileia] itself, it is pure Greek—"she who brings grief to the people"—like the other extant names of Amazons from the archaic period. In this respect it differs from the name [Amazones] itself, which is probably not Greek in origin. Most of the names that have come down to us are known from inscriptions on artefacts;[56] and all of the latter, with the exception of Ainia, are inscribed on representations of the Heraklean Amazonomachy, all but one of them on sixth-century Attic black-figure work.[57] The majority of these names are taken from the epic stock. The first group consisted of names which are known in a masculine form and which have apparently been given a feminine one for the Amazons: Iphitos—Iphito; Alkinoos—Alkinoa; Glaukos—Glaukè; Antimachos—Antimachè;[58] Ainios—Ainia; Tlepolemos—Kleptolemè. The corresponding masculine forms are all used in the *Iliad* for warriors on the Trojan side, except for the name Alkinoos, which is applied in the *Odyssey* to the ruler of the Phaiakians on the island of Scheria, "far away". The second group consists of female names which are known both from epic and from independent mythological tradition and which—like the feminised masculine names—were suitable for the Amazons because of their connotations: Andromache, Andromeda.[59] A smaller group of names cannot be derived from epic examples. A few of them are connected with fighting: Areximacha (?),[60] Toxophilè. A slightly larger group in this category of "general, non-epic" names comprises those names which stand for "virtues": Pantaristè, Areto, Kalliè, Pisto. These appear to be arbitrary, conventional names, which probably belonged to actual women and were now applied to the Amazons.

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[55] On the significance of Thrake and Ares in this connection, see below, p. 259ff.

The artists put their imagination to work in a comprensible way in choosing appropriate names for the Amazons from the available stock of names, some of which were probably everyday names while other were closely associated with the world of myth and epic. The choice was guided and restricted by the scanty information on the Amazons. As women, the Amazons obviously require female names, or even the names of feminine virtues (Kalliè, Pisto) which accentuate their femininity.[61] At the same time, they are women who are equivalent to men in heroic combat, so that names with a martial ring are appropriate too. All the same, the names Andromachè and Andromeda for the opponent of Herakles should be regarded as anomalous:[62] they are both known as mythical women who originally underwent a sacrificial death, but in the more familiar versions they became the wives of heroes.[63] These names on the vases are naturally Greek, for how else was one to know what the names meant and which ones were appropriate? Original, non-Greek names of a similar nature to the collective [Amazones] were apparently not transmitted.

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[56] The exceptions are [Melanippe], "with the black horse", who was killed by Telamon, and [Murina], "scented(?)", who lay beneath the thicket before Troy: on the literary testimonia see above, pp. 148, 150.

[57] There is a comprehensive list of these names in *LIMC*, "Amazones", vol. I, p. 653. I deal only with a selection, taken from the most ancient material.

[58] Bothmer assumes that Antimache is an error for Andromache, the usual opponent of Herakles on the vases, *Amazons*, p. 23; however, this series indicates that this need not be the case.

[59] Andromeda is only attested in epic in *FrHes.* 1, 6, M&W. Andromache is in the first place the wife of Hektor in the *Iliad*. For the mythical background of these female figures, see M. Maaskant-Kleibrink, "The Stuff of which Greek Heroines are Made", in *BABesch* 64, 1989, pp. 1–49.

[60] The reading is controversial; see below, ch. V

All of these names for Amazons can be fitted into hexameters without any difficulty. The same is true of Penthesileia, a name which fills two feet of the line.[64] Semantically, the name Penthesileia is somewhat different, for it is applied specifically to the queen as a champion, a superior warrior who "brings grief to the people"; unlike the epic names of the other Amazons, it has no masculine counterpart.[65] Her name therefore also suggests that

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[61] The name Myrina deviates somewhat from this series, though the name Myrrhine was a female name: a Myrrhine, daughter of Charmos or of Kallias, was married to Hippias, *RE* s.v. Myrrhine.

[62] In the textual traditions Herakles' opponent is only called Hippolyte or Antiope.

[63] See Maaskant, "The Stuff of which Greek Heroines are Made".

[64] One should note the inscription [../NTHESILA] on a few bronze shield-straps, E. Kunze, *Archaïsche Schildbänder. Ein Beitrag zur frühgriechischen Bildgeschichte und Sagenüberlieferung*, Berlin 1950, p. 212. According to Kunze, this is a Doric form of the Attic [Penthesileia] and is not to be found elsewhere. The script is Argive, as one would expect from the character of the reliefs. In view of the unusual nature of this form, I do not regard these inscriptions as an argument against the dactylic foundation of the name [Penthesileia]. For further discussion of the scope of hexameter poetry and the autonomous function of inscriptions on artefacts, see below, pp. 237ff, 379ff.

[65] Although Nagy is not interested in the Penthesileia episode because he is concerned with throwing light on another aspect of the *Aithiopis* (Ch. 9), it is interesting to consider his analysis of the epic proper names in this connection. In *The Best of the Achaeans*, Nagy claims that the names of the heroes more or less coincide with their role in the epic narrative. He takes [Achilleus] to be a composition of [achos] and [laos] (pp. 78ff); since [penthos] is semantically equivalent to [achos] (p. 72), and [leia] is the feminine form of [laos] (p. 72), the names Achilles and Penthesileia are equivalent. Whether

Penthesileia is an independent epic creation. In principle it is not inconceivable that an Amazon [promachos] was devised first, and that she later acquired the name Penthesileia, but the essential function of proper names in epic makes such a procedure unlikely.

Finally, we must consider the importance of the archaeological evidence for a dating of Penthesileia. That the story of her arrival is embedded in the epic tradition can be seen from its implication in the Trojan stories. A *terminus ante quem* is provided by bronze shield-strap reliefs, which are dated from the late seventh century to around the middle of the sixth; these series feature Achilles and Penthesileia, sometimes with inscriptions.[66] Moreover, the motif appears on an Attic terracotta relief depicting the armed figure of Achilles, identified by an inscription, on the right-hand side, and a figure lying on the ground, who is identified as "Ainia" by an inscription.[67] This vanquished female must be an Amazon. No scholar has doubted that that the opponent of Achilles, who was depicted on the piece of the terracotta which is no longer extant, was Penthesileia. The relief is dated to around 600 B.C. These visual representations of the story indicate that the Penthesileia motif had come to form a part of the repertoire of familiar epic themes by the seventh century at the latest.

To summarise our findings so far, the story of Penthesileia's arrival provides a different perspective on the Amazons to the oldest version of the Amazon motif, known only as a formula in two passages of the *Iliad*. The two different views of the Amazons should be regarded as exponents of a widely diffused, flourishing tradition of epic in hexameters dealing with the Trojan heroes, which must be connected with the later *Aithiopis* and the *Iliad* respectively.[68] The relation between them both is not necessarily

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his linguistic arguments are convincing is not for me to decide. For a similar approach to the name of Achilles, see also L.R. Palmer, "A Mycenaean Achilleïd?" *SertaPhilAen* 1979, pp. 255–261.

[66] Kunze, *Schildbänder*, pp. 212–214; *LIMC*, "Achilleus" no. 721. The inscription [Pen] on Delphoi 4479; Olympia B 975 and B 1555 (Kunze) must be intended to identify the figure represented. For more detailed discussion of these shield-straps, see below, p. 225ff.

[67] Bothmer, Ch. I, no. 3; *LIMC* "Achilleus" no. 720; Fittschen SB 85. See below, p. 224.

[68] West, "The Rise of the Greek Epic" provides an outline of both local aspects and Panhellenic trends.

one of chronological succession; on the contrary, it can be better understood as the parallel coexistence of different variants, which are related to one another and may even vie with one another. This principle is in no way affected by the fact that the version contained in the *Iliad* later came to dominate because of its great appeal and related canonisation as a written text. After all, the other variants were also recorded in writing and continued to be known as the Epic Cycle, even though we do not have enough evidence to follow these processes in detail. The place of the Penthesileia episode in this hexameter epic can therefore not be determined on textual chronological grounds, but it is entirely dependent on a (tentative) analysis of the development of the motif within this epic as a whole. The decisive importance of the *Iliad* in the later period should not be taken as an indication that this poem had thrust all other narratives out of the limelight before the end of the sixth century. Judging from the frequency of illustrations, even if we confine ourselves to the theme "Amazonomachy", it is clear that the selection made from the repertoire by the poet of the *Iliad* in no way diminished interest in other themes.[69] Following Edwards' approach, in which questions of relative chronology were only treated after full discussion of the development of a single motif—in his case, the immortality of Achilles -,[70] I have traced the developments within a single epic motif, using the extant versions which were eventually recorded in writing as points of entry to the entire rich and variegated corpus of stories. It is therefore necessary to examine the main points of difference between the two versions of the Penthesileia story before we can move on to questions of relative chronology.

I have already suggested that the reference to [Amazones antianeirai] in *Il.* III, 189 may have been determined by the use of [antitheoio] three lines earlier.[71] Furthermore, the passages in the *Iliad* assign the Amazons to the narrative past. It can hardly be fortuitous that the poet refers to the Amazons on two occasions in this manner. This is emphatically not the case for Penthesileia, who forms a part of the narrative present in the epic poems. Set against the vague references in the *Iliad*, the Penthesileia episode points to the existence of an interpretation and adaptation of this motif. A process of Grecization can be detected from various clues. First, the originally non-Greek name of the collective [Amazones] crystallises out in individual Amazons with Greek names; Penthesileia occupies an exceptional position *vis-à-vis* the other Amazons in this respect. Her name appears to have been created in hexameter poetry and is completely autonomous, while all the names of the other Amazons have a counterpart in epic, other types of mythical traditions, or even outside these narratives. In addition, Penthesileia is the only Amazon to feature in the story of Troy as far as the archaic material is concerned; all the other Amazons who are given a name feature in the Heraklean Amazonomachy.[72] Second, the vague contours of the Amazon are now given a tangible content for the first time with the characterisation of Penthesileia as of Thrakian [genos] and as daughter of Ares. Although the importance of these characterisations remains to be considered, it is clear that they set the Amazons on the boundary of the Greek world, while at the same time they perforce relate them to that same Greek world. It becomes possible to know something about the Amazons as a part of Greek perceptions of the world of humans and deities. The introduction of Penthesileia as an opponent of Achilles and the Achaians cannot be understood except as a transformation of the original motif; the Amazons are no longer confined to the narrative past; they form a part of the present world of the Greeks, and are assigned an appropriate position and character within that world.

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[69] See the following section, as well as Chapters IV and V.

[70] See above, p. 214.

[71] See above, Ch. II; the question of possible other evidence to support this hypothesis is discussed below.

There are no linguistic grounds for ruling out a very ancient date for the formula. The creation of Penthesileia and her role as opponent of Achilles must have been completed by the middle of the seventh century at the latest. The choice of the theme of these two opponents as a decorative motif for the bronze shield-straps indicates that the story was immediately identifiable and widely diffused by the end of the seventh century. In the light of this *terminus ante quem*, the indications of relative chronology support the hypothesis that the Penthesileia motif is later than the formula contained in the text of the *Iliad*.

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[72] This point is discussed further in Ch. V.

Finally, it should be recalled that M.L. West has advanced good arguments for placing the recording of the *Iliad* in a fixed, written form in the same period, viz. around the middle of the seventh century.[73] The possibility that both the Penthesileia episode and the *Iliad* received their definite form in the same period, i.e. around 650 B.C., opens interesting avenues, as we shall see.

Penthesileia in the archaeological record

The black-figure neck amphora on which the famous vase-painter Exekias has rendered the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia **[fig. 3]** dates from approx. 530 B.C.[74] We see a Greek hero striking down an Amazon in a duel. He is portrayed as operating from left to right, and the diagonal thrust of his body is paralleled by the slanting torso of his antagonist, who has sunk to the ground on one knee.[75] Her body is turned away from her assailant in a gesture of flight. The Greek, dressed in a chiton and cuirass and a closed Korinthian helmet, carries the scabbard of his sword at his side and a round shield on his left arm. His right arm is raised to drive his spear into the Amazon's throat. The latter figure is identified by her white skin and the rich decoration of her clothing. A complete panther skin,[76] fastened by a girdle, is draped over her chiton. She too wears a Korinthian helmet (with side openings). She has a sword, and her left arm is hidden behind a round shield. In her right hand she graps her spear, which points ineffectually past her breast at the ground. Her right arm is raised in a defensive gesture instead of an offensive one. She raises her head towards Achilles, but the Amazon and her opponent do not exchange glances.[77]

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[73] West, *Hesiod*, pp. 46–47.

[74] *LIMC*, "Achilleus" no. 723. Cf. also no. 9.

[75] For a concise treatment of the representations of Achilles and Penthesileia see also D. Kemp-Lindemann, *Darstellungen des Achilleus in griechischer und roemischer Kunst*, Bern/Frankfurt am Main 1975, pp. 189- 201.

[76] On the significance of the panther skin, see below, p. 271.

[77] According to *LIMC*, we see an exchange of significant looks, but close examination of the vase reveals that the opponents do not look at one another. In this period down to the end of Attic black-figure work, the use of facial or other body movements to express emotion was never a part of the artistic repertoire. See G. Neumann, *Gesten und Gebärden in der Griechische Kunst*, Berlin 1965, pp. 156–157. It is not certain that this negative conclusion applies to the famous illustration of a hero stabbing an Amazon, the vase from which

The clearly legible inscriptions leave no room for doubt on the identity of the protagonists: Achilles and Penthesileia. Even without the inscriptions, there would have been little reason not to take the scene for an Amazonomachy. The setting corresponds closely to a pattern which had become very common in Attic black-figure work by this time. This pattern is applied primarily to the Heraklean Amazonomachy, but in the sixth century Herakles was portrayed with a lion skin draped over his head and shoulders. The protagonist on the Exekias vase must therefore be some other hero, as is confirmed by the inscriptions. But would it have been evident that the figure depicted here is Achilles if there had not been any inscriptions? What is the relation between Exekias' vase and other representations of Achilles and Penthesileia?

In examining the iconography of the Penthesileia motif, we can start with the the fragment of an Attic terracotta relief from ca. 600 B.C. which depicts the involvement of Achilles in a duel **[fig. 1]**. As the left-hand side of the relief has not been preserved, the identity of his opponent is not certain. Achilles' leg, which is thrust forwards, crosses the naked leg of a third figure, who is lying on the ground and is identified by an inscription: Ainia.[78] This scene deviates from the iconographical pattern that is to be found on other scenes of Achilles involved in a duel with Aineias, Hektor or some other opponent. In the latter, the legs of the protagonists never cross, although the warriors are wearing greaves. Moreover, most of them are considerably later than the Ainia relief.[79]

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the Penthesileia painter takes his name (ca. 460 B.C.; *LIMC* no. 733). This painting is taken to represent the fatal moment at which Achilles falls in love with Penthesileia. By this time, i.e. in the course of the fifth century, the attitude of the face, eyes or body—what Neumann refers to as "Zustandsgebärden"—acquires an expressive value. There is a parallel in an example cited by Neumann (Abb. 18, pp. 40–41). This is a bowl by the Penthesileia painter (Munich, ARV 2, 879, depicting the punishment of Tityos by Apollon, with Gaia on the right. The gesture of Tityos' arm, raised to ward off the blows, acquires enhanced intensity by the bearing of his head and the expression in his eyes.

[78] *LIMC*, "Achilleus", no. 720; "Amazones" no. 169; Bothmer I, 3; K. Fittschen, *Untersuchungen zum Beginn der Sagendarstellungen bei den Griechen*, Berlin 1969, SB 85. On the name Ainia, see above, p. 218.

[79] E.g. *LIMC* "Achilleus" no. 369, a red-figure bowl from ca. 520–510, is the earliest representation in which the legs intersect. It depicts the killing of Troilos (with bare legs) by Achilles. Achilles is on the left, while to the right

Achilles' opponent must have been an Amazon, since this is the only explanation for the presence of a figure with a bare leg and the name Ainia—in other words, a woman—lying dead on the ground in a scene of combat.[80] The missing opponent of Achilles must be Penthesileia. Achilles, who is also identified by an inscription, is depicted on the right, attacking with his spear. In his discussion of this artefact, Bothmer attributes Achilles' position on the right to the function of the Gorgoneion on his shield: had he been portrayed on the left, the decorated side of his shield would not have been visible.[81]

Nevertheless, the disposition of Achilles on the right and Penthesileia on the left is not unique. Besides the Ainia relief, the only other securely identified representations of the motif of Achilles and Penthesileia which antedate the (Attic) black-figure work from the middle of the sixth century B.C. are the bronze shield-strap reliefs, probably of Argive manufacture, some of which were dedicated in Olympia.[82] They are dated between the late

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of Troilos we see Aineias (identified by an inscription). In all the duels between Achilles and Aineias, Achilles is on the left. The duels involving Achilles and an opponent other than Hektor (nos. 542–557) are all late (from the third or second century B.C.). Thus the duel between Achilles and Aineias (nos. 542–545) dates from the second century B.C. Achilles and Hektor (nos. 558–583) occupy various positions, and the distance between the antagonists is gradually reduced. The first example on which their legs intersect is *LIMC* no. 567, a red-figure vase from ca. 520, but both heroes are wearing greaves. The closest parallel is probably the duel between Achilles and Memnon (nos. 807–847). The first securely identifiable representation is relatively early: a Middle Korinthian krater from ca. 580 B.C. (no. 808). Achilles is on the left, Memnon on the right. The distance separating them is the same as that which separates Achilles and Hektor. Their legs are extended. No. 807, a late Korinthian hydria from ca. 530 B.C., is the only representation in this series in which Achilles is on the right. No. 812, a Chalkidian skyphos from ca. 540 B.C. is the first representation of Memnon on bended knee, the typical attitude of the Amazon queen. However, the legs of the combatants do not cross, and Achilles is on the left.

[80] Bothmer has observed that the name Ainia is a *hapax* in the literary and visual tradition. He refers to a certain Ainios, a Paionian who was killed by Achilles (*Il.* XXI, 210). This is an example of a reference to an Amazon who is presented on the basis of a congruent scene in the *Iliad* without being mentioned there by name; see above, p. 218.

[81] Bothmer, *Amazons*, I,3; p. 3.

[82] If *LIMC* is right in interpreting a votive shield found in Tiryns and dating from ca. 700 B.C. as "Achilles and Penthesileia" (no. 719), we should include it here as well. However, the interpretation of this artefact is highly controversial; see the discussion in Ch. V.

seventh century and the middle of the sixth.[83] These reliefs were created using a mould and were then fastened to the leather straps used to attach the shield to the left arm and to the leather hand-grip. They were thus a decoration for the inside of the shield, and could only be seen by the bearer himself. The straps were attached to the upper and lower sides of the shield by what were usually palmette-shaped plates. The support in the middle of the strap, which divided the strap into a shorter upper section and a longer lower section, was also decorated in the same manner. These attachment plates sometimes encroached on the relief at the end. The mould consisted of at most seven or eight rectangular figures within a decorative frame. The bronze strip was placed on the mould and hammered into two parts. Either the long series for the lower side was decorated with the first figures and the short series for the upper side began with the lower set of figures (series V); or vice versa (series VI). As a rule, therefore, the upper and lower sides are not symmetrical around the centre, but complement one another provided the upper row is treated as the extension of the lower. This relatively arbitrary arangement rules out the possibility of an iconographical programme arranged symmetrically around the centre.

The choice of illustrative material was confined to themes which could be represented in miniature, preferably involving pairs. The themes on the shoulder-strap reliefs —Herakles, Troy, Thebes—seem to be arranged haphazardly; as Brommer discouragingly remarks: "We are unable to detect any principle of arrangement".[84] Nevertheless, this may be an overpessimistic conclusion. Investigation of a programme on the basis of these examples may make it possible to reconstruct the entire mould. For present purposes, however, I shall confine my remarks as far as possible to those reliefs featuring Penthesileia.

Among the series of reliefs ten scenes involving Herakles have been identified, four of which belong to what were later to become the canonical Twelve Labours.[85] There is no duel between Herakles and an Amazon in this material.[86] Theseus is depicted with two of his feats: the slaying of the Minotauros, and the abduction of Helene.[87] All of the nine identified Amazonomachies, some of which include inscriptions, are of the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia. Generally speaking, the pattern is the same in each case, although they are not all replicas of the same original—they are similar, but not identical.[88]

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[83] *LIMC*, "Achilleus", no. 721; Kunze, *Schildbänder*, pp. 1–6; 148–151. I follow the numbering in Bothmer, *Amazons*, I, 5–13.

[84] F. Brommer, *Herakles*, 1972^2, p. 55.

[85] Lion, Hydra, Wild Boar and Geryoneus; Kunze, *Schildbänder*, pp. 93–126.

[86] The interpretation of the scene on B I, 14 is too controversial for it to

The nine examples can be divided among the following five groups:[89]

series V **[no. 3]**

d. Herakles and Lion
e. Theseus and Minotauros
f. antithetical sphinxes (support)

a. double panther emblem
b. abduction (Theseus and Helene?)
c. Achilles and Penthesileia
d. Theseus and Minotauros (half)

series VI **[no. 4]**

a. antithetical sphinxes
b. Achilles and Penthesileia
c. Herakles and Lion (half) (support)
b. Achilles and Penthesileia
c. Herakles and Lion

d. Theseus and Minotauros
e. double lion emblem

series XXIV **[no. 5]** (incomplete) (support)

v. birth of Athena
w. Achilles and Penthesileia (ins.)
x. unidentified
y. Aias and Kassandra
z. Herakles and Geryoneus

series XXIX **[no. 6]** (incomplete) (beginning and end uncertain)

a. Herakles and the Kerkopes
b. Achilles and Penthesileia (ins.)
c. Aias and Kassandra
d. Perseus kills Medousa

series XXXII **[no. 7]** (incomplete) (beginning and end uncertain)

a. unidentified (warrior with chiton)
b. Achilles and Penthesileia (ins.) **[fig. 2b]**
c. Herakles and Lion
d. antithetical sphinxes

In each of the relevant representations,[90] Penthesileia is on the left, wearing a chiton and helmet and carrying a spear. In conformity

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be included here; see Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 5, with bibliographical references.

[87] Kunze, *Schildbänder*, p. 127.

[88] Kunze, *Schildbänder*, p. 214.

[89] The numbering follows Kunze's classification.

[90] The fullest account of the scenes involving Amazons is in Bothmer.

with the Amazon pattern, she collapses at the knees. Unless she does not have a shield at all (B I, 8–11), we see her shield from the inside (B I, 5–7) or have a side view of it (B I, 13). As for Achilles, he wears greaves, a cuirass and a helmet and carries a small Boiotian shield with various emblems. He attacks with his spear. The position cannot be explained in terms of the Gorgoneion this time because it is absent, and there are no chronological grounds for viewing these shield-strap reliefs as depending on the Attic terracotta relief. Apparently the disposition of the Amazon on the left and the Greek on the right was common practice at this period and in this material.

Finally, bearing in mind that any conclusions we draw are bound to be tentative in view of the scanty material available, we can note that series **[3]** and **[4]** (Kunze V and VI) display certain correspondences. They are both among the oldest examples, they both carry inscriptions, and since it is these two reliefs which make it more or less possible to reconstruct the original mould, they both throw some light on the position of the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia. The moulds must have been organized as follows:

[no. 3]	**[no. 4] [fig. 2a]**
a. double panther emblem	a. antithetical sphinxes
b. abduction (Theseus and Helene?)	b. Achilles and Penthesileia
c. Achilles and Penthesileia	
d. Herakles and Lion	c. Herakles and Lion
e. Theseus and Minotauros	d. Theseus and Minotauros
f. antithetical sphinxes	e. double lion emblem

I have deliberately inserted a blank space in **[no. 4]** to bring out the parallelism of the two series. The illustrations in these series consist of pairs. Each begins and ends with a brace of fabulous monsters: panthers, sphinxes **[no. 3]**, sphinxes, lions **[no. 4]**. The place of Achilles and Penthesileia between the two monster-slaying heroes appears at first sight to affect the perception of their duel. However, the heroes stand to the left of their respective monsters, while Achilles stands to the right of the Amazon. Those who saw the reliefs must also have regarded Achilles in a different light from Herakles and Theseus. There is thus no complete analogy between the Amazon and the monsters, implying an equivalence between "women" and "animals".[91]

In these reliefs, the protagonists of mythic stories stand as a sort of shorthand equivalent for the heroic feat (or other act, such as the suicide of Telamonian Aias or the attack on Kassandra by Aias son of Oïleus) which unambiguously serves to identify them. The very quantity of the extant reliefs and their function on the shield-straps offer a good indication of which elements of myth were singled out and how they formed a part of the mental world of the men who wore them. Achilles, the hero of Trojan epic *par excellence*, is represented in these reliefs in his duel with Penthesileia. Assuming that the scenes on these reliefs could be identified rapidly and without difficulty, it would appear that the duel of Achilles and Penthesileia played a crucial part around the mid-seventh century in the perception of Achilles as a hero of the Trojan war. Vice versa, the absence of a Heraklean Amazonomachy, in contrast to the appearance of this hero in combat with various monsters among the whole collection of shield-strap reliefs, indicates that the Amazonomachy was not a theme which served readily and immediately to identify Herakles. This is all the more remarkable in that the reliefs themselves come from Argos, where Herakles traditionally occupied a special place.

To turn to the archaeological evidence provided by decorated pottery, we find representations of the duel of Achilles and Penthesileia on a variety of types of vases from different areas. They are limited in number, and identification is not always without its problems.

The following is a list of illustrations of Achilles and Penthesileia on extant Attic black-figure vases (the dates are tentative):[92]

[no. 8] Chalkidian amphora betraying the stylistic influence of black figure. Right: Greek hero on foot. Left: an Amazon fleeing on horseback. Date: ca. 550–540. Interpreted as Achilles and Penthesileia.[93]

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[91] *Pace* DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons*, passim. For the analogy between Amazons as [parthenoi] and the domain of Artemis, see below, p. 420ff.

[92] All of the relevant red-figure representations are later than 500 B.C. They are not discussed here in detail, though I have taken them into account in the general survey of the material. We should also mention a painting which was to be seen on the throne of the statue of Zeus in Olympia (Paus. V,11,6). It dated from ca. 460 B.C. No longer extant, it is reputed to have been the first representation of Achilles supporting the dying Amazon (*LIMC* no. 739).

[no. 9] Amphora by Exekias. Left: Achilles. Right: Penthesileia in flight. Date: ca. 540–530.[94]

[no. 1] Amphora by Exekias. Duel of Achilles (left) and Penthesileia (right). Date: ca. 530.[95]

[no. 10] Amphora by the Nikosthenes painter. A hoplite pursues a fleeing Amazon, interpreted as Achilles and Penthesileia. Date: ca. 530.[96]

[no. 11] Hydria. A Greek carries an Amazon from the field of battle over his shoulder. The scene is sometimes interpreted as Achilles and Penthesileia. Date: ca. 510–500.[97]

[no. 12] Attic amphora. Left: Achilles on horseback. Right: Penthesileia on horseback. Both figures are identified by inscriptions. A wounded Amazon lies on the ground. Associated with **[no. 8]**. Date: ca. 510.[98]

The development of these iconographical patterns and attributes, which can also serve as means of identification, was a gradual process.[99] There is a considerable degree of variation in the portrayal of Achilles and Penthesileia, especially if one bears in mind the relatively limited number of representations. There is also considerable variation in the provenance of the extant representations: Argos (the shield-strap reliefs, **[nos. 3–7]**), Chalkis (the first vase-painting, **[no. 8]**), and Attika (the Ainia relief **[no. 2]** and the other black-figure vases **[nos. 1, 9–12]**). All the same, it is possible to indicate some chronological developments in this material. In the earliest representations of the duel, dating from the last quarter of the seventh century to the middle of the sixth **[nos. 2–7]**, Achilles, who is on the right, is depicted in the act of killing Penthesileia with his spear. She collapses at the knees (this cannot be seen on the Ainia relief).[100] From now on the pattern is reversed, in a form which continues down to ca. 480 or even 450/440 B.C.[101] In this later version, Achilles is on the left and Penthesileia collapses at the knees on the right, or even falls to the ground. Achilles' weapon is still the spear.[102] In terms of body postures, this pattern closely resembles the Heraklean Amazonomachy, apart from the following features: Achilles is distinguished from Herakles by the use of the spear instead of the sword or club and by the absence of the lion skin; and Achilles never grips his Amazon opponent, while Herakles always does.[103] From ca. 460 B.C. various changes are introduced to the earlier pattern of Achilles and Penthesileia. The positions of the protagonists are reversed once more, as the Greek is situated on the right, the Amazon on the left. Now the Greek stabs the Amazon with a sword, while she begs for mercy or collapses.[104] This is also the period to which the painting on the throne of Zeus belongs.[105]

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[93] *LIMC*, "Achilleus" no. 722. The identification as "Achilles and Penthesileia" is based on the illustration of a struggle between two Greeks over a body on the neck of the vase. If this scene is taken to represent the contest between Achilles and Memnon for the body of Antilochos, Penthesileia is appropriate as a motif from the *Aithiopis*.

[94] *LIMC* "Achilleus" no. 724.

[95] *LIMC* "Achilleus" no. 723.

[96] *LIMC*, "Achilleus", no. 727; identification as on **[no. 8]**. The direction of the pursuit is not indicated in *LIMC*.

[97] *LIMC*, "Achilleus", no. 725, but it has also been suggested that the theme represented may be "Theseus and Antiope", *LIMC*, "Antiope" (II), no. 15.

[98] *LIMC* "Achilleus" no. 726.

[99] For the first stage of this process see Fittschen, *Untersuchungen zum Beginn der Sagendarstellungen bei den Griechen*.

This entire series also includes a number of artefacts on which the opponents are not identified by inscriptions. The first, *LIMC* no. 733 from ca. 460 B.C., is the vase to which the Penthesileia painter owes his name. In this case, as in that of nos. 736 and 731, the identification is based on the "significant looks" exchanged by the Greek and the Amazon.[106] As we have seen, however, this assumption should be treated with caution. There are numerous contemporary vase-paintings of different kinds on which the eyes are also a striking feature, while on the best known sixth-century representation of the Amazon—the duel on the vase by Exekias—her gaze and that of Achilles are deliberately prevented from meeting. Despite the intensity of the eyes of the hero on the vase by the Penthesileia painter, it is difficult to determine whether he is really looking at the Amazon, nor does the representation itself furnish any compelling interpretation of the meaning of this look. The way this scene, in which the Amazon is unarmed and lays her hand on the Greek's chest, parallels the scene of the punishment of Tityos by Apollon points towards a gesture of supplication rather than a duel.

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[100] *LIMC*, no. 720; 721; on **[no. 8]** (*LIMC* no. 722, ca. 550 B.C.) Achilles is on foot while Penthesileia is on horseback, but he is still on the right.

[101] The inevitable uncertainties in the dating make it impossible to assert with absolute certainty which of the two Exekias amphorae is the earliest. The duel scene **[no. 1]** is generally taken to be slightly later than the pursuit **[no. 9]** on stylistic grounds, but the pattern of the duel is closer to the earlier representations of the duo, apart from the Chalkidian vase **[no. 8]**.

[102] *LIMC*, nos. 723, 724, 729, 734, 735, 737, 738. The latest in this series, nos. 735 and 737, date from ca. 480 B.C. No. 738, which conforms to the same pattern, is not a vase-painting but a gem. No direction is indicated for no. 736, a column krater by the Agrigentum painter dating from ca. 450–440, but the presence of a spear suggests that this belongs to the same series. On no. 726 both Achilles and Penthesileia are mounted; here too Achilles is on the left and Penthesileia on the right **[no. 12]**.

[103] For the Heraklean iconography see Ch. V.

[104] *LIMC* nos. 732, 733. On no. 731 (early fourth century) Achilles has a sword, but he is on the left and the Amazon is on the right. On no. 732 Achilles' shield bears an inscription, but this does not apply to the Amazon.

[105] See above, n. 92.

Exekias' treatment of the original pattern of the duel—for we may assume that his vase was the first to introduce this change—is certainly remarkable. The similarity between this pattern and that connected with Herakles is so close that we are bound to consider the possibility of a connection between them. An enormous production of Heraklean Amazonomachies got under way in the second quarter of the sixth century, of which a few hundred have been preserved.[107] Herakles is always portrayed on the left, and he always has the Amazon in his grip, usually by the helmet crest, occasionally by the waist or the throat.[108] His weapon is usually a sword, with which he stabs the Amazon dead, though sometimes, particularly in red-figure work, the sword is replaced by a club. If these iconographical series constitute a decisive argument, the immutability of the pattern means that the figure on the Tiryns shield must be Herakles, thereby ruling out an identification of the figures as Achilles and Penthesileia.

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[106] Cf. *LIMC* nos. 723, 731, 733, 736.

[107] *LIMC* contains a selection of 59 black-figure examples, out of a total of 167 representations of the Heraklean Amazonomachy.

[108] The object held by Herakles in his outstretched arm—a standard gesture—on no. 86, a red-figure representation from ca. 490, is a bow; the Amazon lies out of reach on the ground. The only example among those selected in *LIMC* that deviates from this pattern is no. 83: Herakles is on the right, he kills the Amazons with his sword (outstretched arm), while he awkwardly clutches his bow with his left hand.

Exekias' rendering of Achilles is certainly not identical to that of Herakles: Achilles does not hold the Amazon in the grip of his outstretched arm, but he uses his left hand to hold his shield, and his weapon is a spear, not a sword.

The resulting chronological sequence is as follows. The iconography of the Amazonomachy begins around 700 B.C. with the Tiryns shield, probably depicting the Heraklean Amazonomachy. The duel forms part of a more large-scale battle scene.[109] The first indication of the motif "Achilles and Penthesileia" is provided by the shield-strap reliefs from the last quarter of the seventh century. The scene is generally portrayed as a duel, though on a few occasions a fallen Amazon lying on the ground has been added. Sometimes one (or both) of the protagonists is on horseback. The pattern set by Exekias, which inverts the previous one, predominates from ca. 540/30 to ca. 460. After 460 the positions of the assailants are reversed once more, Achilles acquires a sword as his weapon, and the motif of supporting the body of Penthesileia is introduced.[110] This implies that the pattern set by Exekias retained enough characteristics which were specific for Achilles (arms, attributes), but that in other respects it was influenced by the dominant Heraklean pattern to be found in Attic black-figure work.

It is clear from the representations of Achilles and Penthesileia that it was the *duel* between the two protagonists that was the main event in the eyes of artists, at least down to the middle of the fifth century. The confrontation follows the normal pattern for the duel as it was to be found, for example, in battles involving Greeks and Trojans. The same practice is followed in the correspondence as regards clothing between the Amazon and the Greek. If we compare these illustrations with the description of the Amazons in epic, the question arises as to whether the ambiguities which we have detected in the formula [Amazones antianeirai] could be expressed visually, and if so whether this was actually done. The polyvalence of the ethnic designation [Amazones] is not suitable for this end, for it is difficult to imagine how the linguistic and phonetic associations could find visual expression. The second element of the formula, however, can be found in visual representations of the Amazons, at least in vase-painting. The body always has a white complexion, as was customary in representations of women, while the dress and armour are the same as those worn by men. The exceptional element in this respect is the occasional addition of an animal skin—a panther skin—to the dress of the Amazons.[111] The femininity of their bodies and the incidental ornament to their dress are the only two attributes which distinguish the Amazons from other combatants in heroic scenes of battle.

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[109] For the significance of this detail in the Heraklean iconography, see Ch. V.

[110] This motif explicitly sets the confrontation between Achilles and Penthesileia within the context of a large-scale battle, a theme which exceeds the boundaries of the present study.

Nowhere in this visual tradition is the theme of "love" touched upon, let alone elevated to the central position. By contrast, representations of the rape of Antiope by Theseus emphasize the iconographical parallel between this abduction and other cases in which a man forces himself upon the object of his [eroos].[112] This indicates that, at least at the conscious level, the confrontation between Achilles and Penthesileia was primarily seen as a heroic encounter. To put it circumspectly, the artists observed the heroic code of epic which determined the relationship between Achilles and the Amazon.[113]

The representation **[no. 11]** of a Greek carrying an Amazon off the field of battle points in the same direction. In view of the lack of inscriptions and the uniqueness of the representation, we are forced to speculate about the interpretation of this hydria. There are various possible interpretations: a Greek carrying off an Amazon; Theseus carrying off Antiope (though this is very unlikely in the light of the rest of the material and the narrative tradition);[114] a Trojan carrying off an Amazon (Penthesileia?); or Achilles carrying off Penthesileia. The scene is evidently related to the older and more well known version of Aias carrying off the corpse of Achilles.[115] If the figures involved really are Achilles and Penthesileia, it is still pure speculation to suppose that this heroic act conceals an erotic significance. The only suggestion that there is something unusual about the scene is the fact that Achilles would then be carrying off the body of his *opponent*, while Aias shoulders the body of one of his own men. Since the archaeological record does not provide any clues for the further interpretation of this scene, the unique identification of Achilles and Penthesileia must be regarded as unlikely. Moreover, there is yet another argument in favour of regarding the corpse as that of "an Amazon" rather than of Penthesileia in particular. In the visual record, Achilles is portrayed as a hero who fights his adversary, pursues her, and finally strikes her down in a duel. The bent knee of the Amazon and the action of the spear leave no doubt that she is seriously wounded. The *moment suprême*, whose visual pendant can be found in numerous heroic duels, is Achilles' victory—but Penthesileia is never portrayed *as a corpse*. This significant detail is even more striking if we consider the two representations **[nos. 8 and 10]** in which the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia (to follow the conventional interpretation) is related to the struggle between Achilles and Memnon over Antilochos' dead body. Both scenes of combat are situated in the Trojan narrative after the death of Hektor. The fact that the story of Penthesileia preceded that of Memnon in the final version of the *Aithiopis* is of only relative importance for the tradition as a whole, although this sequence contrasts all the more with that of the vase paintings showing the Amazon in flight after the death of Memnon. At any rate, the contrast between the dead figure of Memnon and the living Amazon is full of significance: her death, which is certain to follow the scene that has been represented, is *not* represented. None of the other artefacts contains a representation of Penthesileia after she has been killed either. In this respect too, then, the identification of the Amazon on **[no. 11]** as Penthesileia would be unique. The least forced interpretation of this figure is thus as "an Amazon", but not Penthesileia.

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[111] On the Exekias vase **[no. 1]**, and on a votive shield whose controversial interpretation will be dealt with in Ch. V.

[112] For the relevant literature see my "Patronage and the Pisistratidae".

[113] The earliest representation of the killing of Thersites by Achilles dates from ca. 350–340 B.C., *LIMC* "Achilleus" no. 794.

[114] On the chronology of the story and representations of Theseus and Antiope see J. Boardman, "Herakles, Theseus and the Amazons", 1ff.;, cf. also C. Hofkes-Brukker, "Die Liebe von Antiope und Theseus", in *BABesch* 41, 1966, pp. 14–21, and my "Patronage and the Pisistratidae".

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[115] *LIMC*, "Achilleus" nos. 860–896. The earliest representations, nos. 861–864, date from ca. 700. It is debatable whether this material actually illustrates the episode involving Aias and Achilles (see *Od.* XXIV, 36–42), or whether it is to be interpreted as a generic scene.

If this tradition is compared with that of the death of Hektor, the corpse of Achilles, or the many other representations of dead male heroes—even Aias' suicide is regularly illustrated in the bronze shield-strap reliefs -, as well as the many dead Amazons in representations of the Amazonomachies, we are bound to conclude that the corpse of Penthesileia was deliberately avoided as a motif by the visual artists.

We cannot conclude this survey of the visual record without considering both the function of the inscriptions on some of the vases and other artefacts, and the relationship between the iconographical tradition and the written sources. To begin with the inscriptions on the shield-strap reliefs, Kunze claims that the application of inscriptions implies that the scene was not immediately recognizable; readily identifiable scenes did not require them.[116] However, he regards the Penthesileia representations as exceptional in this respect. The two oldest examples **[nos. 3 and 4]**, of which a few replicas have been found,[117] do not bear any inscription; the later examples **[nos. 5 to 7]**, dating from the second quarter of the sixth century, are inscribed with the name of Penthesileia, but not with that of Achilles. Kunze suspects that this practice is connected with the large flow of representations of Amazons during this period in Attic black-figure work featuring Herakles as the main protagonist. Without an inscription, a scene involving an Amazon would have been taken to involve Herakles, i.e. the duel between Herakles and the Amazon queen that forms part of the large-scale Amazonomachy. If the viewer was to recognize the scene as the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia, this had to be marked by means of inscriptions.

Kunze's interpretation is apparently based on the assumption that a duel between a Greek and an Amazon was naturally read as the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia in the period preceding the large-scale production of Heraklean Amazonomachies. It was not until Herakles threatened to take Achilles' place that inscriptions were required to indicate which protagonist was involved. The shield-strap reliefs provide an *argumentum e silentio* in favour of this hypothesis, since none of the duel scenes is of Herakles fighting with an Amazon. Unlike the combat with the

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[116] Kunze, *Schildbänder*, p. 214.
[117] B, I, 5–7; 8–9.

Lion or other monsters, the duel between Herakles and an Amazon was not an obvious motif.

Theoretically there is yet another possibility: the representation of a duel between a Greek and an Amazon without inscriptions might not be intended to depict either Achilles or Herakles. In that case, it would be a generic duel between an Amazon and another figure, without necessarily referring to specific figures or a specific setting. In other words, such generic scenes would indicate a certain autonomy of the Amazonomachy as a motif, which could then be utilized to illustrate a particular story by the addition of special characteristics (inscriptions and attributes).

The function that Kunze attributes to the inscriptions only makes sense in a setting in which illustrations which lack such special characteristics are taken to be non-specific. However, despite the absence of such inscriptions or special attributes, a representation can still be specific if the iconographical pattern provides a fixed meaning or identification. The question of whether a duel between a Greek and an Amazon should be identified as involving Herakles or Achilles, or whether it should be interpreted generically, can only be answered when the distinct iconographies of Achilles and Herakles have been established. If a representation fails to conform to this pattern, either inscriptions are required or it may be intended to portray a generic Amazonomachy.

Since the iconography of Achilles and Penthesileia proves to conform to a clearly defined pattern and a preliminary outline of the commonest Heraklean pattern has also been traced, Kunze's argument loses its cogency. Inscriptions were not required on the shoulder-strap reliefs, nor after Herakles had come to dominate black-figure vase-painting.

The inscriptions on the vases and other artefacts imply that some artists could write and that some customers or viewers could read. In this sense, the letters stand for a certain feeling of superiority and they illustrate the pleasure experienced in the use of writing. In this respect, they should be compared with other iconographical resources rather than be treated as the summary expression of an extensive written literature. In the case of the Penthesileia reliefs, the inscriptions are not functionally required, although modern scholars are grateful to find them. Kunze therefore aptly remarks on the inscriptions on the shield-straps:

> The short lifespan of writing and its limited use even in the brief period of its heyday can only be understood in a setting in which image and script are not intimately connected.[118]

We also have to consider a different theoretical issue at this point. Even though all these representations can be connected with an *iconographical* tradition that develops autonomously, this autonomy is only relative. The representations are certainly not the direct expression of a specific text, nor are they likely to be a relatively autonomous tradition of illustrations to a traditional text, comparable to Rembrandt's etchings or Doré's biblical engravings. Nevertheless, on the whole these representations must be connected in some way with epic narrative in general. In other words, although we cannot deduce from Exekias' vase-painting that Penthesileia was described as wearing a panther skin in the final version of the *Aithiopis*, nor can we assume on the basis of the terracotta relief that an Amazon called "Ainia" played a major role in the epic tradition, these representations do indicate that the motif of Achilles and Penthesileia had been incorporated in epic in the period in question; that the duel between them played an important part in that epic; and that this scene was interpreted in relation to other types of heroic combat, both in texts and in visual forms of expression. Even if we assume that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were put down in writing in the first half of the seventh century and that the recording of the other epic narratives followed in the wake of this event, these changes still failed to bring about a direct and total transformation in the customary method of narration or in the experience of myths and mythological representations. Even after the so-called Peisistratid redaction of the Homeric texts, traditional oral narration will have remained the usual way of enjoying the epic tradition for the majority of Greeks.[119]

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[118] Kunze, *Schildbänder*, p. 214.

[119] See e.g. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*; id., *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, dates a far-reaching alphabetization in Athens no earlier than the fifth century. There is general agreement among experts that alphabetization is diffused at a very slow pace, not only among the population but also among the various forms of cultural transmission; Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*; *The Interface between the Written and the Oral*; R. Thomas, *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge, 1992.

It is therefore necessary to relate the written and visual testimonia to one another, but they should be regarded as sporadic relief markers in an uncharted landscape which will never be mapped completely. This landscape is the entire art of oral narrative in archaic Greece, which is naturally connected with social and religious processes. The general question of how these various elements are related to one another is not at issue here. It is enough to indicate the contours of a number of these traditions inasmuch as they have a direct bearing on the Amazon motif and may throw some light on the meaning of the Penthesileia motif.

The heroic pattern

Epic in hexameters was undoubtedly the most prominent form of narrative art in Greece during the (pre-)archaic period. M.L. West's extensive article[120] deals with the rise of Ionian epic in the eight century and of Euboian epic in the seventh, adding:

> Other innovations may have been caused by the new success and popularity of epic itself: I have in mind the epicization of what had been cult myths or folk tales. Legends of heroes overcoming monsters were dressed up in hexameters; travellers tales from far and wide, of being marooned on an island with a beautiful nymph, of outwitting a one-eyed giant or a brace of seductive Sirens, were not only epicized but attached to a hero of the Trojan War and put in a relationship with that war.[121]

This description corresponds largely to what was referred to above as the landscape setting to the epic and visual record. The poetic quality of epic attracted and incorporated all kinds of motifs, adapting them to its structures in the process. The Amazon motif may have formed a part of the epic material, at least as a formula, at a much earlier stage than what West regards as the heyday of epic, but an earlier dating does not essentially affect the process of incorporation and adaptation. Analysis of this process enables us to see how the Amazon motif was adapted to the structures of epic, or vice versa.

The figure of Penthesileia developed from and after the concise epic Amazon motif. While the eponymous stories show that the Amazons could also function outside an epic framework, the archaic testimonia on Penthesileia indicate a genesis within Greek epic. Her name is Greek, she fights against the most prominent Greek hero, and she is characterized as a part of the imaginary world of the Greeks: the phrases "of Thrakian [genos]" and "daughter of Ares" clearly imply a Greek frame of reference. The archaic visual testimonia emphasize the heroic duel between Achilles and Penthesileia. It is the relation between heroes in Greek epic which forms the context for the relation in which Achilles and Penthesileia are placed. The question of why Achilles was insulted by Thersites is thus first a foremost a question involving the same pattern of relations, for it is this code which explains what was unacceptable about the [legomenos eroos].

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[120] West, "The Rise of the Greek Epic".

[121] West, "The Rise", p. 172.

Among the five formative levels of epic distinguished by Russo,[122] those of "theme" and "worldview" will prove to be especially relevant in the case of Penthesileia. It was above all Albert B. Lord's *The Singer of Tales* which first proposed to shift the focus of attention from the formula—on which Milman Parry's researches were based—to the theme. Lord shows how the singer uses these short narrative segments to enhance the story according to his choice and ability. Examples of such segments are: the hero enters his tent, undresses before going to sleep, and dreams; or the reception accorded to a visitor to one's home. Each theme retains its own regular structure, irrespective of its further elaboration and of its relation to other themes. No matter who the guest or his host may be, the reception scene is primarily the same each time.[123]

The smallest building-block of epic is the formula; the largest traditional element is the story, with which the audience is usually completely familiar, such as the story of the siege and fall of Troy. The most comprehensive factor in Russo's classification, the worldview, is expressed in and has recourse to the story.[124]

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[122] Viz. formula, theme, story, pattern and worldview; see the discussion in Ch. II.

[123] Lord, *Singer*, Ch. 4.

[124] E.A. Havelock sees the function of epic *par excellence* as the formulation and expression of this worldview. In this connection he refers to epic as a social encyclopaedia containing all the information that a society needs to preserve and hand down, whether it concerns matters of religion or how to rig out a vessel; *The Literate Revolution in Greece*, passim, esp. pp. 126ff. This

In scope and function, the theme is situated midway between the story and the formula: the story is constructed by means of themes, and the themes themselves are highly formulaic.

However, more comprehensive than the story and less comprehensive than the worldview is the pattern. The use of this term can be illustrated from the example of the *Iliad.* This epic is an elaborate version of a part of the story of the siege and fall of Troy. The outcome of the siege is apparently still undecided, but of course the singer and the audience know what the fate of the city will be. We tend to regard this story as a more or less fixed entity, distinguishable, for example, from the story of Thebes; Troy has three gates and is surrounded by ships, for instance, while Thebes has seven gates and a corresponding number of heroes. However, this regular filling in of the story with figures, numbers and other details is a technical procedure which is characteristic of every story as the end product of an oral tradition. There are various indications that the same structuring factors are at work in the story itself as in the smaller, thematic units. This means that tradition provides a regular, open structure which can then be filled in with a greater or lesser degree of variety. This phenomenon can be traced far more easily in the Yugoslavian songs analyzed by Lord because of the wealth of material. Lord did not attempt an in-depth analysis of what he refers to as "narrative pattern", perhaps because it is a much less salient feature of extant Greek epic.[125] All the same, he draws attention to

> a strong force that keeps certain themes together. It is deeply embedded in the tradition; the singer probably imbibes it intuitively at a very early stage in his career.[126]

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view is too limited and too stringent, since epic serves many other purposes besides these practical ones. Moreover, epic preserves countless outdated social and other forms which would be useless ballast in an encyclopaedia of this kind. It is more illuminating to regard the narrative structure itself as the main factor in the transfer of the worldview; on the narrative character of myth see, e.g. Doty, *Mythography*, pp. 14–25 with extensive bibliographical references.

[125] The fact that this type of thematic structure also has consequences for the analysis of the epic as a whole has been noted by D.M. Gunn, "Thematic Composition and Homeric Authorship", *HSCP* 75, 1971, pp. 1–31.

[126] Lord, *Singer*, p. 98.

Goody refers in this connection to two aspects of a story: the structural relation between categories, whose presence in the story is uncovered by semantic analysis; and the "structures of recall".[127] He describes the latter process as follows:

> By structures of recall I mean the aspects of a myth or other complex standardized oral form (SOF) that an individual (or plurality of individuals) grasps when he reproduces this utterance [. . .]. It appears, then, that the framework of recall lies neither at the surface level, by which I mean the level at which verbatim memory operates, nor yet at the level of 'deep structure' as discerned by many mythologists and literary critics. On the contrary, the important role seems to be taken by narrative and by other 'event structures'. I take narrative as being a special case of an event structure, namely reported or imagined events linked by common participation.[128]

Goody emphasizes that the structure shapes the story of the ceremony (myth and ritual) as well as playing an essential role in the recall and (fresh) combination of narrated or experienced events to form a coherent whole. His term 'event structure' corresponds in practice to what scholars like Lord refer to as 'theme', but Goody uses the category to illuminate the correspondence with ceremonial practices. "Narrative" is thus a special case of the same principle as "theme". However, since "narrative" is such a wide conventional term and is open to a plurality of interpretations, I shall not use it here in this sense. Instead, I follow Lord in using the term "pattern" to refer to this structuring coherence which determines the main outlines of the story before it is given shape in the form of protagonists and their acts. Like themes and formulae, pattern determines both the possibility and the limitations of variation in the story.

This somewhat elusive category can be illustrated by a few examples. The commonest are: the siege and fall of a city;[129] the journey and homecoming of a hero; and perhaps too: the genealogical representation of local history,[130] and the structure of oral religious poetry.[131] The pattern contains the key aspects of beginning, middle and end which are essential for the story as a whole. This pattern is realized with specific figures and events, and it is filled in by the themes of the poet's choice which can be connected with the implications of the pattern. In the case of a siege, these might be: reason for the siege (seduction; insult; misunderstanding; thirst for honour); details on the participants; course of the siege; and the cause of the fall of the city (curse; trickery; treachery; divine caprice).

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[127] Goody, *The Interface*, p. 171.

[128] Goody, *The Interface*, pp. 171, 173.

[129] H.W. Singor, *Oorsprong en betekenis van de hoplietenphalanx in het archaïsche Griekenland*, Leiden 1988, pp. 6, 32, 69 arrives at similar conclusions. W. Burkert, "Seven against Thebes", in *I Poemi Epici*, pp. 29–48 is aware of the same principle on pp. 32–33, 45, and it is implied in J.B. Hainsworth's response to Burkert's article, *I Poemi*, p. 49; see also the brief discussion in M.W. Edwards, *Homer. Poet of the Iliad*, Baltimore 1987, pp. 61ff.

It is a pattern in this sense which concerns us here. This narrative structure, containing the acts and vicissitudes of epic heroes in battle, will be referred to as the *heroic pattern.* Closer analysis of the *Aithiopis* soon reveals the way in which this pattern supports the story. The poem as summarized in the *Chrestomathia* consists of two series of analogous events. They take place in mirror inversion, so that the pattern is fully utilized twice, on the Achaian side and on that of their opponents. First Penthesileia appears on the scene, probably in the role of [promachos] of her entire people. She fights with Achilles, is killed, and is buried. Now Memnon arrives, presumably escorted by his people too, the Aithiopians. He engages in battle with Antilochos, and after the death of the latter, he takes on Achilles. Memnon is killed and buried. Now Achilles occupies the foreground as a warrior; he too is killed and buried. Thus Penthesileia and Memnon on the Trojan side, and Antilochos and Achilles on the Greek side, are involved in the same sequence of events.

The basic pattern can be represented diagrammatically as follows:

I hero
II opponent
III combat
IV death
V rite of burial
VI glory [kleos]

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[130] J. Schwartz implies this possibility in his interpretation of family relations as the structuring elements which support the story in the traditions of various cities, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia* p. 299.

[131] Havelock, *The Literate Revolution*, pp. 156–165 contains an extensive discussion of this conclusion, which was drawn by B. Peabody, *The Winged*

Each of these elements is essential to the construction of the story. This is simple and consistent: a hero is a hero provided he achieves fame. The field of battle is the site *par excellence* where a hero can win this glory. This means that he will fight—and will probably be killed into the bargain: his mundane, generally brief life-span will be sacrificed to obtain everlasting renown.[132] The establishment of this fame is the *raison d'être* of epic, since the epic poem itself *is* this fame.

One of the factors which lend the *Iliad* its unity as a composition is the pattern of Hektor, which is unfolded in its entirety in the course of the narrative.[133] The Achilles pattern is only partly told; the theme "the hero temporarily withdraws from battle"[134] is here used as a complicating mechanism to extend the story, while tension is maintained precisely because everyone knows that the last phases of the Achilles pattern are bound to occur eventually.[135]

Word. A Study in the Technique of Ancient Greek Oral Composition as Seen Principally through Hesiod's Works and Days, Albany 1975, pp. 206–233 and passim.

[132] It may be possible to detect two versions of the hero: one which stresses the feats of the hero in this world; and one which focuses on the hero's immortality after death in the cult which celebrates him. The relation between [kleos] and death, resulting from the synthesis of the two traditions, has been pointed out by Snodgrass, "The First Figure Scenes" and A.T. Edwards, "[Aristos Achaioon]: Heroic Death and Dramatic Structure in the *Iliad*", *QUCC* 46, 1984, pp. 61–80. The question has already ben touched on in connection with Edwards' analysis of the heroism of Achilles, and it will be discussed in more detail in Ch. V. For a brief characterization of Achilles as *the* hero of battle and death, see also K.C. King, *Achilles. Paradigms of the War Hero from Homer to the Middle Ages*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1987 (though it hardly mentions the duel with Penthesileia).

[133] In this way the pattern brings about a satisfactory end to the story as it is presented in the extant *Iliad.* Of course, the theme of "vengeance", viz. Achilles' revenge on Agamemnon, is also an important factor in the cohesion of the poem, but Achilles drops out of it in Book XIX, while the story runs on to the end of Book XXIV. In the selection of epic motifs analyzed by Kopff (see above), the final segment of the Hektor cycle could be used to introduce the Penthesileia pattern.

[134] See too Kirk, *Songs*, pp. 352–353; the Irish hero Cuchulain also sometimes withdraws from the fray for a prolonged period; see too J. Bremmer, "What is a Greek Myth?", in idem, *Interpretations of Greek Mythology*, Beckenham 1987, p. 3 and p. 8, n. 8.

[135] Achilles refers to it himself in his famous speech (*Il.* IX, 412–416), in which [kleos aphtiton] (413) is contrasted with the homecoming. G. Nagy considers that the death of Achilles has been deliberately excluded from the story because it would elicit too much grief [akhos] on the part of the audience instead of fulfilling the need to celebrate [kleos] and remember the hero in a cult, *The Best of the Achaeans*, pp. 113–114. This suggestion is at odds with

The *Aithiopis*, which in view of its length must have been much closer to ordinary oral performances than the *Iliad*, resorts to the same model, but on a smaller, simpler scale and with the use of repetition. On the basis of the summary we can deduce the deployment of fourteen themes, some of them used alternately, and which could hardly be given an extended treatment in view of the modest scale of the poem as a whole.

1) the hero is of divine descent (Achilles, Penthesileia, Memnon)
2) burial (Penthesileia, Antilochos, Memnon (probably, although it is not mentioned, Achilles)
3) lamentation by the women (Achilles and Thetis; probably Memnon and Eoos)
4) funeral games (as part of 2; Achilles)
5) insult (Thersites)
6) vengeance (Achilles versus Thersites and Memnon)
7) quarrel (over Thersites; over Achilles' arms)
8) manslaughter and purification (Thersites)
9) divine support (Hephaistos (one explicit mention, already implied in connection with Achilles' armour), Thetis, Eoos, Zeus, Apollon)
10) intervention of Apollon (twice)
11) mothers are concerned at the lot of their sons; also present in 3)
12) prediction (of destiny) (Thetis)
13) the hero withdraws (Achilles)[136]
14) [eroos] (Achilles and Penthesileia?)[137]

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the notion that [kleos] is connected with death, as well as with the fact that the death of Achilles certainly was the subject of heroic narrative.

[136] According to Palmer, "A Mycenaean Achilleïd?" the name "Achilles" is a "speaking name", indicating a hero who withdraws from the fray full of resentment. This view resembles Nagy's interpretation, though it has different implications.

[137] This theme remains vague in the *Aithiopis*. The role of [eroos] in the relation between Achilles and Penthesileia is precisely what is at issue, while the source does not throw any light on the relation between Achilles and Antilochos. The intensity and function of relations between men are implicit in epic, in contrast to the classical testimonia. This lack of precision is due to two factors: as a story of combat, epic relegates sexual relations of any kind to the margins of the story; and the relations between men were probably connected with an initiatory stage, which is implied in epic but does not feature in the story itself; see the succinct treatment by F.G. Naerebout, "Male-female relationships in the Homeric Epics", in Blok and Mason, *Sexual Asymmetry*, pp. 109–146, esp. n. 32. The only reference to a particular relation between two men in the *Iliad* is to the bond between Achilles and Patroklos.

This recurrent use of the same themes[138] tends to increase dramatic excitement; the meandering[139] of the story-line brings about a certain balance in the portrayal of both parties. The virtual unassailability of Achilles is compensated for by the extra divine support of the other side. Memnon, with his divine mother, his arms fashioned by Hephaistos and his miraculous escape from the underworld, is almost a match for Achilles: some of the same themes are used in the modelling of both heroes.[140] It is tempting to suppose that the visual representations of epic often refer to these themes, for example with regard to duels and divine assistance.[141]

All the themes in the *Aithiopis* also occupy a central position in the *Iliad.* Patroklos and Antilochos fulfil similar functions;[142] intervention of Apollon; concern of (immortal) mothers for their sons; the infamy of Thersites; [stasis] in the Achaian camp. However, the two epics differ as regards the elaboration and implications of the themes. Patroklos fights because Achilles refuses to do so, while Antilochos' role in the *Aithiopis* is unmotivated. In both epics Achilles' heroic [timè] is at stake in his relations with other women than his mother, but in different ways: in the *Iliad* it is because he has won Briseïs in battle, while in the *Aithiopis* it is because he has defeated Penthesileia. This variety in the use of structurally comparable themes is characteristic of the art of oral poetry.

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[138] It is not easy to offer an unambiguous definition of the term "theme". Kirk's discussion makes use of a remarkably large number of examples of summary themes, *Songs*, pp. 72–80. To take the examples given above, one can say: the hero enters his tent (theme), undresses before going to sleep (theme), and dreams (theme), while the whole sequence—the hero is sent an important dream in his sleep—can also be called a "theme". Russo's use of the word "theme" in "How and What?" corresponds to both Kirk's small-scale "theme" and to the wider sense of a larger unit or sequence. Russo also applies the term "theme" to the even larger unit that I have designated as a "pattern", although he also uses the word "pattern" in referring to the latter unit, p. 44.

[139] In his well-known *Homer and the Homeric Tradition*, 1958/1967^2, C.H. Whitman treated the composition of the extant epics as a reflection of Geometric culture, supporting his arguments with an analysis of the *Iliad* as consisting of two rigorously symmetrical halves (see too above, n. 31). Whitman's Geometric model, however, comes closer to a Procrustean bed; moreover, it presupposes a detailed symmetry on a scale which is incompatible with the practice of oral delivery. If epic style is to be characterized by metaphors at all, then I would opt for the meander rather than the symmetry of the Dipylon vases on which Whitman's interpretation is based. Certainly, the Homeric narratives do display a certain symmetry in the form of reciprocity or balance, as in the division of strength among the two parties at the siege of Troy, or in the vicissitudes of the family of Bellerophontes (see below, Ch. IV)—but this symmetry is of a different kind to what Whitman has in mind.

[140] The neo-analytical interpretation which takes the *Iliad* to be inspired by the *Aithiopis* therefore sees the figure of Achilles as a direct borrowing from that of Memnon (see above, p. 211ff). Rather, both figures are created using similar oral poetic resources.

[141] G. Beckel, *Götterbeistand in der Bildüberlieferung griechischer Heldensagen*, Waldsassen 1961; a systematic analysis of the visual material from this perspective would probably yield results.

[142] See too Edwards, "Achilles", p. 224; and above, n. 137.

As an elementary plot in the heroic story, the heroic pattern is bare and schematic. Presented in this fashion, it is no more than the skeleton of the story. Perhaps the singers were barely aware of this element in their creation, for it works naturally and imperceptibly. The effectiveness of the pattern, however, is not only due to its function in the structure of the narrative. It also has a special social psychological significance because it incorporates a series of fundamental and contradictory cultural demands in a narrative sequence.

At this point we have to pay more attention to the mythical character of this type of epic narrative. As W. Burkert puts it:

> There are two main dimensions of myth, corresponding to the well-known linguistic distinction between "connotative" and "denotative" functions of language: there is a narrative structure that can be analysed as a syntagmatic chain of "motifemes", and there is some reference, which often may be secondary and tentative, to phenomena of common reality that are thus articulated, expressed and communicated; this reference is most manifest in the use of proper names. In most mythical texts, both dimensions intertwine and influence one another; their dynamics, however, are quite different. The narrative structures are based on a very few general human or even pre-human programmes of action, and thus are quite easily understood and encoded in memory, to be reproduced, or re-created, even from incomplete records. This is the fascination of the tale to which we all are sensitive [. . .]. The denotative "application" on the other hand, which turns a tale to myth, is anything but general [. . .].[143]

As the most concise form of narration of the combat, the pattern contains a description of the entry of the protagonists, their physical confrontation, and the ensuing death of one of them. This series can be regarded as the elementary "programme of action". When included in the epic as a whole, however, in which it incorporates and partly determines a range of relevant aspects, the pattern comes to express denotations which are "anything but general". As elements, hero, opponent, combat and—usually—death also feature in so-called folktales, but in the mythical pattern the burial rite and corresponding representations of the afterworld and renown play an essential role.[144] In turn, these elements have an important influence on the confrontation between the heroes in the mythical pattern, so that the combat itself also acquires an extra dimension.

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[143] W. Burkert, "Oriental and Greek Mythology: The Meeting of Parallels", in J. Bremmer, ed., *Interpretations of Greek Mythology*, 1987, pp. 10–40; pp. 11–12.

The relation between narratives in general and myth as described by Burkert is further refined in Terence Turner's definition of the narrative:

> Narrative, as a form of mythopoesis, affords a means of elevating a normative or ideal pattern from the status of one among a large number of structurally commensurable and equally plausible alternatives to that of cosmic demiurge, creating and constraining its potential rivals to conform to its own structure, or alternatively, that of the ground of being from which the others derive and whose underlying structure they end, willy-nilly, by exemplifying.[145]

If "pattern" is taken to refer to both the narrative pattern and the pattern of human activity to which it refers, this description matches Goody's analysis and brings out the point of intersection of Burkert's "connotative" and "denotative" dimensions in the myth. Turner's definition can thus be reversed:

> Mythopoesis, expressing itself as narrative, affords a means... etc.

The power of referral of the mythical narrative, its validity for a specific cultural complex which is what makes it a myth instead of just an exciting story, is also present in the heroic pattern. Although the correspondences between heroic narratives from divergent cultures are unmistakable and have been analysed in a variety of ways,[146] revealing that elements of the heroic pattern also feature in epics from different backgrounds, it is specific to Greek epic in this respect.

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[144] This is the premise and the basic tenet of Nagy's *The Best of the Achaeans*. The hero becomes the object of a cult, so that the entire warrior complex transcends the human dimension. Even if Nagy's controversial argument makes too much of a good point, the point itself is sound enough.

[145] T. Turner, "Narrative Structure and Mythopoesis: A Critique and Reformulation of Structuralist Concepts of Myth, Narrative and Poetics", in *Arethusa* 10, 1977, pp. 103–163.

In short, the primary function of myth as narrative is not to describe but to prescribe; in Turner's words, it constrains rival descriptions to conform to its own narrative structure. The heroic pattern issues prescriptions covering a specific area of experience: the code of heroic combat, the death of the hero, the burial rite, and fame.

If we now proceed to apply these insights to the myth of the Amazons, we can begin by noting that the position of the Amazons within the pattern becomes clear: they are the opponents of the hero. This is hardly surprising in itself, but it should be stressed that their confrontation with the hero on the field of battle is also determined by specific norms. Since they only feature as an opponent and have no narrative of their own—at least in the archaic material predating the middle of the sixth century—it is preferable to refer to their role in epic as the Amazon *motif* rather than the Amazon *myth*, to bring out the fact that they feature as an element in *someone else's myth*, which is determined by the heroic pattern. Only Penthesileia spans the whole pattern, so that in her case we are justified in speaking of the myth of Penthesileia.

Second, this application of the Amazon motif in epic illustrates its essential function for the codes dealt with by epic, particularly as regards the heroic pattern. Whatever the genesis of the motif in epic may have been, the Amazons are not just an ornament,[147] but they constitute an integrated component of the epic codes. This applies *a fortiori* to Penthesileia, and the relevance of the Amazon motif for the heroic code is brought out most strongly in her story.[148]

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[146] See, for example, H.M. Chadwick and N.K. Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature. Vol. I. The Ancient Literatures of Europe*, Cambridge 1932; M. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, London/Melbourne 1952; Whallon, *Formula, Character and Context. Studies in Homeric, Old English and Old Testament Poetry*. R. Renehan, "The *Heldentod* in Homer: one Heroic Ideal", *CPh* 82, 1987, pp. 99–116, analyses the *differences* between Homeric and Irish epic.

[147] In the discussion of E. Chr. Kopff's paper, W. Burkert remarks: "The Amazonomachia does not really come in. From the point of view of narrative, the Amazonomachia is not the story of Achilles and Memnon, and all the comparisons [viz. the thematic parallells] apply to the story of Achilles and Memnon. The Amazonomachia is an additional theme that Achilles fights still another adversary, Penthesileia. It seems to me that it is just a coincidence that in the summary of Proclus the Amazonomachia takes part of the

This essential function is also expressed in the structure of the *extant* epics, in which Penthesileia has two counterparts: on the scene of battle, she and her Amazons succeed Hektor and the Trojans and precede Memnon and the Aithiopians.[149] This is the most striking and prominent aspect of her activities, which is situated within the heroic parameters. As far as the [eroos] motif is concerned, however, Penthesileia's counterpart is Briseïs. This

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Memnonis and that both are labelled *Aethiopis*." Kopff's rejoinder: "*Amazonia*, as my title suggests, may have been a separate work. The title is very late (Suda, 10th cent. AD) and the great scholars who ignored it in working on *Aethiopis* were using Proclus' summary. In my interpretation it provides a good introduction to the tale of Memnon and explains why Achilles is not fighting when Memnon first appears..." R. Hägg, ed. *The Renaissance of the Eighth Century*, p. 62. Whether the eventual inclusion of the story of Penthesileia in the *Aithiopis* is coincidental or functions as Kopff describes, the theme itself cannot be regarded as "additional", because the Amazon is not simply "another adversary". The number of opponents is certainly a factor in the growth of heroic glory, but the fact that the prominent figure of Achilles is linked with an extended Amazon narrative shifts the emphasis from the quantity of the opponents to their quality. Burkert's claim that "the Amazonomachia does not really come in" is untenable once the structure of the epic narrative is taken into account.

[148] K. Dowden, *Death and the Maiden. Girls' Initiation Rites in Greek Mythology*, London/ New York 1989 suggests initiation rites as the basic context for the Amazons, surfacing in particular in the love between Achilles and Penthesileia. This basic feature he holds to be "a motif *wonderfully transformed* by Arktinos when Achilles kills Thersites for suggesting such a thing!" (p. 62; emphasis added). Even though the epithet [antianeirai] may have absorbed such associations in the elaboration of the story, and though the many "tombs of the maiden" were to await dead Amazons to fill them in later times, the Amazon motif and that of Penthesileia in particular display too many features which are are at odds with such an initiatory interpretation, and lack too many which would have been crucial to sustain it. Dowden does not explain why and how the motif was transformed by Arktinos. On the contrary, the Amazon myth is part and parcel of the heroic epic tradition, referring to codes of honour on the battlefield and the inherent tensions between masculinity and femininity in this context.

[149] These relations are processed in various ways in the visual material. The role of the Amazons as allies of the Trojans is regularly used as the basis for a type of Amazonomachy involving a large group of Greeks and an equally large group of Amazons, without the participation of Herakles as an identificatory figure. Bothmer labels these representations variously as "Trojan Amazonomachy" or as "Heraklean Amazonomachy without Herakles"; *Amazons in Greek Art*, Chs. II and III, passim. For objections to the latter classification, see below, Ch. V.

remarkable ambivalence of the Amazon queen, combining the main aspect (fighting) with a reference to the (sexual) relations between the sexes, also corresponds to the interpretation of the formula [Amazones antianeirai] advanced in the previous chapter.

Finally, this approach to the mythic narrative is also compatible with the interpretation of Thersites' activity presented earlier in this chapter. If the narrative aspect of the myth is regarded as a form of speaking (telling a story) which compels other "readings" to conform to its version, there must be a connection between the heroic aspect of the Amazon motif and the [eroos] with which Thersites taunts Achilles.

After these reflections on the form of the heroic pattern, we can now deal with its social and cultural relevance for the question of identity. Although the elements of the pattern are intricately intertwined, we shall concentrate on the combat [aristeia] itself.[150] Success in this major trial of strength is the chief ambition of every hero and the object of his training. In return, it confers tangible rewards in the form of [timè] (booty, possessions, social prestige) and immortality through posthumous fame. On the negative side of the balance are the fear, the violence, the blood, the pain, the grief at the loss of friends and relatives.

[Aristeia] is a masculine affair. Despite the extraordinary instances of the defence of their city by women known from later sources, in epic the responsibilities and spheres of activity of men and women are distinct, and sexual difference is culturally marked by the fact that it is men, not women, who bear arms.[151] Heroes seek out opportunities to fight, for they guarantee their identity as men in the social hierarchy. They are obliged to fight to defend the lives of their wives, children and group.

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[150] My discussion of the heroic pattern is based on the *Iliad.* For accounts of heroic combat, see e.g. C.A. Rubino, "A Thousand Shapes of Death. Heroic Immortality in the *Iliad*", in *Arktouros. Studies in Honour of B. Knox*, 1979, pp. 12–18; J.-P. Vernant, "Panta kala. D'Homère à Sémonide", *ASNP* 9, 1979, pp. 1365–1375; G.S. Kirk, "War and the Warrior in the Homeric Poems" in J.-P. Vernant, ed. *Problèmes de la guerre en Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1985^2, pp. 93–118. J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death*, Oxford 1980 focuses on the negative side of heroism. On the various kinds of combat and the problems presented by the source material, see Singor, *Hoplietenphalanx*, pp. 64–89, 112–124; for a comparative assessment of heroic behaviour, see Van Wees, *Status Warriors*.

[151] See further Naerebout, "Male-female Relationships"; above, pp. 169–173.

Without heroes, the latter are defenceless. The contradiction—which has been well brought out by James Redfield[152]—is that time and again heroes have to risk death in order to protect life. If they are killed in battle, they fail as protectors; if they do not fight, they are already doomed to failure. It is this impossible task, which has to be accomplished in a supernatural world of death and violence, which sets the hero apart from his [oikos].

Redfield sees the opposition between the world of one's own group and the world of battle as analogous to the opposition between culture and nature. However, these terms are inadequate to describe the processes which take place in each of these two spheres.[153] Redfield has recourse to the notion of "nature" because when the hero engages in battle, he falls under the sway of Ares in a state of ecstasy which gives him superhuman strength and makes him oblivious of all other human relations.[154] All the same, we should be wary of regarding this moment as a full transition to a state of nature. The totality of acts and values in which the combat takes place is associated with various aspects of culture: the social necessity of the combat, the immortality of fame, and the view of death.

In fact, we can distinguish at least four separate dimensions of human interaction in epic.[155] First, there is the community of the [oikos], consisting of men, women, children and possessions. Second, there is the world of men at war. Although there is only a wall separating the [oikos] of the besieged Trojans from the scene of battle, the Achaians are far from home, and if the men are engaged in battle, the women whom they have taken captive remain behind in the camp. Third, there is the dimension of the man-to-man combat itself. Finally, there is the world of the dead: the Underworld, where most members of the [oikos] will meet again, and an Elysium in which a smattering of dead heroes live on as immortals.[156]

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[152] J.M. Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad. The Tragedy of Hector*, Chicago/London 1975.

[153] Aside from the fact that any definition of nature is itself culture-bound; cf. E. Ardener, "Belief and the Problem of Women", in S. Ardener, ed. *Perceiving Women*, Oxford 1975, pp. 1–27.

[154] Griffin also emphasises the abnormal physical and mental state of the warrior, *Homer on Life and Death*, pp. 19–20 (like wild animals), pp. 35–36: (madness inspired by Ares).

[155] "Dimension" here approximates to the French "espace" to designate a sphere in which certain norms and rules of behaviour hold, where some people are included and others excluded, and which may have strong, though not exclusive associations with a specific location. The same is true of "public" and private": see above, pp. 10–13, and J.H. Blok, "Scheiding van sferen, onderscheid in sekse? De scheiding tussen openbaar en privé en de ontwikkeling van vrouwengeschiedenis", *Tijdschrift voor Vrouwenstudies* 35, 1988, pp. 241–262.

These four dimensions or worlds are functionally interrelated, while at the same time each of them is marked by the distinctions between male and female, young and old, living and dead. Cohesion in one's own group is based on kinship relations in which the (sexual) relation between men and women and the bond between parents and children are decisive. Within this social organization, however, there is a sharp distinction between the spheres of activity of men and women, as well as a hierarchy between young and old. Waging war is based on mutual cooperation between men, in which kinship is an important factor, albeit not the most important one. While age may be associated with wisdom and prestige in one's own group, youth and vitality are the most important qualities in battle. The combatants therefore almost all belong to the same generation. There is a certain degree of correspondence between the relations on the battle-field and those in one's own group,[157] but despite the fact that both of these worlds are exclusive male preserves, the correspondence does not hold in all respects.

Women and children are excluded from this male world. Women can acquire fame,[158] but it is of a different kind from the [kleos] that is won by male warriors. Children[159] and caring for the [oikos] bring honour to a woman; while men excel in competition, female virtues are of the "quiet" kind like dedication.[160] The fame that is accumulated in one's life-time is only consolidated at death. The [kleos] of a man is only assured by a noble death in battle. His name lives on among mortals after he has died, his body has been cremated or buried, and his soul has descended to the Underworld. It is hardly surprising that sexual segregation is a feature of the Underworld as well. In the *Nekuia*,[161] Odysseus first encounters three persons who predict the future,[162] then a long series of women, and finally a group of dead men. The shades form a catalogue of the famous dead.

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[156] E. Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry*, Berkeley 1979, Chs. 3 and 4, and Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans*, Ch. 10 and passim, emphasize the immortality of the hero after his death, his godlike qualities, and the ritual that confirms this identity. This is emphatically *not* life in any underworld. See also Edwards, "Achilles in the Underworld".

[157] A man defends his honour at all times, and is out to outstrip the others in both dimensions. Likewise, a man always enjoys prominence on the basis of his possessions, whether they are inherited or won in battle. According to A.T. Edwards, "[Aristos Achaioon]", pp. 62ff., [aristos] refers to excellence both in battle and in council.

[158] The crucial passage is *Od.* XXIV, 192–202, referring to an [aoidè chariessa] for Penelope and an [aoidè stugerè] for Klytaimnestra. There is no reason to follow Nagy, *The Best of the Aechaens*, in interpreting this as evidence for traditions of praise-poetry and blame-poetry on the women concerned. In this passage [kleos] is reserved for Odysseus (196), whose fame is largely due to his [nostos]. Cf. H.P. Foley, 'Reverse Similes' and Sex Roles in the *Odyssey*", in *Arethusa* 11, 1978, pp. 7–26; A.L.T. Bergren, "Language and the Female in Early Greek Thought", in *Arethusa* 16, 1983, pp. 69–95; S. Murnaghan, "Penelope's [agnoia]: Knowledge, Power and Gender in the *Odyssey*" in

No matter whether the dead hero is Greek or Trojan, he is lamented in the same words, emphasizing the grief of his next of kin, parents, and often his young wife and children. In the verbal exchanges which precede the exchange of blows, the combatants themselves also refer to this loss of the beloved one by the next of kin, though the tone this time is a mocking boast. However, the evocation of the opponent's parents and the proud boast of one's own descent are aimed to achieve an emotional impact and betray an awareness of the mortality of both antagonists. As far as the human significance of combat and death is concerned, the *Iliad* makes no distinction between opponents: there is no difference between "us" and "them".

The combat itself, when the opponents put all they have into the fight, their [thumos] and deeds inspired by Ares, is thus the only moment at which the combatants forget all other relations. The combat is both a stage in the heroic pattern and a dimension from which all others are excluded. Before joining battle,

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M. Skinner, ed. *Rescuing Creusa: New Methodological Approaches to Women in Antiquity. Helios* n.s. 13 (2), 1986, pp. 103–115; on the significance of the manner of death for [kleos gunaikoon] in tragedy, see N. Loraux, *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman*, Cambridge Mass./London 1987, pp. 26–30, 63.

[159] As extensively demonstrated in the pseudo-Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women.*

[160] See too Naerebout, "Male-Female Relationships", passim.

[161] On the importance of Odysseus' visit to the Underworld for his [nostos] and his [kleos], see A.L.T. Bergren, "Odyssean Temporality: Many (Re)Turns", in C.A. Rubino and C. Shelmerdine, eds. *Approaches to Homer*, Austin 1983, pp. 38–73.

[162] His comrade Elpènoor, his mother Antikleia, and the visionary Teiresias, *Od.* XXIV, 51–224.

the warriors name their relatives, and the victor appeals to the same relatives immediately after the combat is over, calling his comrades to view his victory, recalling his prominent ancestry, foreseeing the glory that he will enjoy among future generations, and reminding his dying enemy of the sad fate of those whom he is leaving behind. Alternatively, the dead hero is grieved, his friends try to avenge his death and to rescue his corpse, and eventually the women indulge in lament beside the bier.[163] The dead and the living are connected by the remembrance of the dead and the honour that they enjoy among mortals.

The scene of combat is thus distinct from the other dimensions. It is a world of men of more or less the same age who are fighting for their lives. Although the background to the struggle is formed by their relations with their own group, which they have to defend,[164] on the field of battle the only relation that counts is that of hero and opponent. In a certain sense, the struggle *is* this relation. The stature of the hero and the measure of his glory grow with the stature of his opponent. The more impressive the opponent, or the number of opponents, the more glory accrues to the hero. The opponent is therefore just as important for the hero's [kleos] as the hero himself. Awareness of this makes it necessary to identify the opponent as a worthy antagonist. Besides, [kleos] depends on the death of one of the two, a point of no return which the hero both fears[165] and desires.[166] In epic, this ambiguity in man-to-man combat is brought out by including a large degree of identity between the parties involved within their antagonism.[167]

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[163] Despite certain changes, these ritual forms of lament have persisted in Greece for centuries. These laments are held not only for those who die in combat, but for all the dead, and even for fallen cities; see M. Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, Cambridge 1974.

[164] These relations affect not only the selection of the heroes themselves, but also the hierarchical relations between them: for instance, Agamemnon is the leader of the Achaians because his [oikos] of armed men and possessions is the largest, so that Achilles is subordinate to him despite his superiority in battle.

[165] On fear of death in the *Iliad* see Renehan, "The *Heldentod* in Homer: one Heroic Ideal"; Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death*; Redfield, *Nature and Culture.*

[166] On this contradiction see B. Effe, "Der Homerische Achilleus. Zur Gesellschaftlicher Funktion eines literarischen Helden", *Gymnasium* 95, 1988, pp. 1–16.

[167] This remarkable phenomenon also applies in the case of Herakles, although he is a hero of a different kind from the protagonists in Trojan epic.

When the urge to do battle drives the two opponents toward one another, they address one another as acquaintances. After killing three of his opponents, Idomeneus challenges Deïphobos to fight with the following words:

> Deïphobos, are we then to call this a worthy bargain,
> three men killed for one? It was you yourself were so boastful.
> Strange man. Do you rather come yourself and stand up against me
> so you can see what I am like, Zeus' seed, come here to face you.
> Since Zeus first got by Krete Minos, who cared for his people,
> and to Minos in turn was born a blameless son, Deukalion,
> and Deukalion sired me to be lord over many people
> in wide Krete, and now my ships have brought me to this place
> to be an evil for you and your father and the rest of the Trojans.
>
> (*Il.* XIII, 446–454)

Idomeneus addresses his opponent directly, and in the first instance his words invite the latter to recognize him as an individual. Even though he is clearly bent on demonstrating his superiority by referring to his divine ancestry in order to induce pessimism in Deïphobos from the start, the words used to describe himself and his opponent typify them as essentially of the same kind. His speech presupposes that Idomeneus' father and that of Deïphobos, the Kretans and the Trojans, and in the end Idomeneus and Deïphobos themselves, resemble one another.

The challenge issued by Idomeneus to Deïphobos has its counterpart in his call for help when he sees another enemy approaching soon afterwards:

> This way, friends, stand by me, I am alone, and terribly
> I fear the attack of swift-footed Aineias advancing upon me,
> powerful as he is for the slaying of men in battle.
> Likewise the flower of youth is his, where man's strength is highest,
> since were we two of the same age, and in this same spirit,
> soon he would win me in a great battle, or I would win him.
>
> (*Il.* XIII, 481–486)

It has often been noted that, in his function as a slayer of monsters, Herakles himself has retained or even developed animal-like characteristics. It is as if he has incorporated something of his opponents and is himself not fully situated within culture; see e.g. G.S. Kirk, "Methodological Reflexions on the Myths of Heracles", in B. Gentili en G. Paioni, eds. *Il mito Greco. Atti del Convegno Internazionale*, Rome 1977, pp. 286–297. Vermeule, *Aspects of Death*, pp. 83 ff. goes further in concluding that in general the combat of a human with an animal and of a human against another human being are represented in a completely analogous fashion.

Aineias is of divine ancestry and he is younger and stronger, which implies that he is likely to emerge victorious. The last two lines of the citation express Idomeneus' view of the combat if this were not the case: if they were alike [homoios] in age and in [thumos], the result of the combat would not be a foregone conclusion. Only fate would decide between equals. In the visual record this role of fate is generally portrayed in the [psuchostasia] of Achilles and Memnon: the decision of fate lies in the scales, in which the soul of Achilles is weighed against [anti] that of Memnon, and which determines which of them is to die.

The basic equivalence of the combatants is a potential source of tension; it is the condition of their antagonism and can also lead to a feeling of shared destiny and thus reconciliation. At the moment of battle, the opposition between them is primary, and it is only when an opponent has been vanquished that his equal status acquires its full significance. Nonetheless, death is inevitable for one of them. It is rare for a loser to succeed in gaining the mercy of his opponent by appealing to their very similarity. The [kleos] of the hero who has just notched up another victory is of more account than the proposed ransom which will be added to his [timè]. Moreover, the winner is usually still in the grip of the lust for battle brought on by Ares, and this may lead him not only to plunder the body (to acquire valuable possessions) but even to mutilate it. In that case, the loser is also deprived of an appropriate burial rite and a life after death, so that he is condemned to remain nameless among mortals.[168] The hero who dies at the hands of an equal or superior and whose corpse is not dishonoured wins a glorious death. The corpse of a man who has just died in action is regarded as possessing nobility.[169] No matter how paradoxical it may seem, this confirms the identity of the combatants: whether one or the other dies, death confers equal honour on them both.

The theme of death as impartial leveller does not apply in the normal sense to the epic heroes. Most of them end up as shades in the Underworld, and in this respect the combat in this life presages the fact that they share the ensuing condition in common. However, a hero who dies so young that he has not yet made a name for himself through his great achievements or has not fought against opponents of equal standing barely acquires any glory among future generations. A hero is referred to in terms of the opponents whom he has overcome, if at death he is to obtain [kleos] among mortals when his shade leaves the earth. In terms of glory, death certainly does not treat all the dead in the same way.

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[168] See the extensive discussion in Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death.*

[169] See J.-P. Vernant, "La belle mort et le cadavre outragé" in G. Gnoli and J.-P. Vernant, eds. *La Mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes*, Cambridge/Paris 1982, pp. 45–76.

The clearest statements of this worldview are expressed by the poet of the *Iliad*. The word [aristos] is used to describe the foremost figure of each people, the man who is the [proomos anèr] in battle and whose voice carries the most weight in counsel.[170] More strikingly, however, [aristos] is also used to indicate a different quality when it refers to a man who has died in the [aristeia].[171] Edwards analyses two series of [aristoi] in the *Iliad*, one on the Achaian side and one on the Trojan side, who acquire the epithet [aristos] through their death. The equality of these opponents who have died in battle is expressed at the level of diction. The ambivalence of [aristos]—the foremost hero, but also the foremost dead hero—confirms the equivalence between Achilles and Hektor, which is also constructed from other narrative motifs.[172] This remarkable equivalence between opponents also characterizes the representation of Achilles and Memnon, although the term [aristos] does not occur literally in the latter case.[173] It should therefore be clear by now that in epic the confrontation between two combatants is set against the background of a shared worldview and network of social relations, and that the man-to-man combat can only take place on the basis of a mutually acknowledged, basic equivalence between them.

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[170] Edwards, "[Aristos Achaioon]", passim.

[171] "[. . .] in terms of heroic ethics and ideology the destiny of the hero's death is inscribed within the title which an *aristos* bears." Edwards, "[Aristos Achaioon]", p. 72.

[172] Idem, pp. 73ff.

[173] For another aspect of the parallelism between Achilles and Memnon, see below, p. 322ff.

Ares and Thrake

The vague mythical space and uncertain origins of the Amazons are replaced by a precise location and descent within the mental framework of Greek culture by the attribution to Penthesileia of the identifying epithets "daughter of Ares" and "of Thrakian [genos]". Since these qualifications occur in epic, their meaning and connotation are also bound by the confines of the epic world. All the same, epic may include material which is not immediately related to the themes of heroic poetry, but which function within it in accordance with the rules of the genre. Furthermore, it may be assumed that the two epithets are not at odds with the perception of the Amazons. In other words, they contribute to the representation of the Amazons, and do not conflict with what may be regarded as essential aspects of these women.

It is conceivable that Ares' role as the father of the Amazons is connected with an interpretation of the adjective [Arèios] as a patronymic.[174] The warriors before Troy are sometimes described by this epithet,[175] and they are often compared with the god of war when they give in to the lust for battle.[176] Since the descent of these heroes was already a fixed datum in the epic, there was no reason to take the term literally in their case. In the case of Penthesileia, however, matters were different. If she was to be assigned a genealogy which was consonant with her nature, a problem immediately presented itself. It was no coincidence that the two goddesses who were consistent with the character of the Amazons as [antianeirai] and which were later associated with them—Pallas Athena and Artemis—were virgins. They were thus ruled out as mothers, while heroic or mythical genealogies displayed a general preference for descent from a god or goddess. A male god of war was there required to father the Amazons, and the appropriate candidate for this position was the ultimate warrior, Ares.

Although Ares was later regarded as the ancestor of all the Amazons, the importance of his paternity in the Amazon tradition is very minor. According to the later Athenian tradition recorded by Ploutarchos, the Amazons sacrificed to their ancestor on the site which was therefore called the Areopagos. Nevertheless, Ares never pays any heed to these descendants, unlike his protection of his male heirs, as in the rival story about how the Areopagos obtained its name.[177] Even when the Amazon Antiope is abducted by Theseus, Ares does nothing to save his daughter's honour or to avenge her; he is conspicuous by his absence, unlike Poseidon and Athena, the deities who protect Theseus, who appear on various representations of this theme.[178] Ares can thus hardly be described as an active father. The epithet [Arèios] is apparently used to create a quasi-genuine paternity, but the relation is then confined to the level of symbolism.

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[174] See above, p. 181.

[175] Menelaos *Il.* III, 339; sons of the Achaians *Il.* IV, 114; Aias *Od.* III, 109.

[176] Extensive description in Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death*, esp. pp. 34 ff.

The introduction of a father for the Amazons potentially implied certain other themes connected with the Greek notion of paternity. The marriageability of a Greek girl—as distinct from the possibility to engage in sexual intercourse without any socially recognised bond—was above all dependent on the presence of her male [kurios], generally her father. As the father of the Amazons, Ares was thus in principle, according to Greek social traditions, their [kurios] and they were in principle nubile. In mythical reality, however, he never performs this function. No Greek man marries an Amazon.[179] The principle of their exclusively feminine company is not essentially affected, since after all

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[177] For these two stories see above, pp. 182–183; on the former see also U. Strutynski, "Ares: a Reflex of the Indo-European War God?", *Arethusa* 13, 1980, pp. 217–232; p. 219.

[178] *LIMC* "Antiope" (II), nos. 2 (Athena), 4, 5 (Poseidon).

[179] The relationship between Theseus and Antiope is unquestionably one of involuntary abduction, a form of association which must be distinguished from ordinary marriage, *pace* I. Jenkins, "Is there Life after Marriage? A Study of the Abduction Motif in Vase-paintings of the Athenian Wedding Ceremony", *BICS* 30, 1983, pp. 137–145, and even if (symbolic) abduction of a [parthenos] may have preceded the marriage ceremony proper, cf. Ch. V. Besides, Theseus' association with an Amazon must be considered a failure as a motif, see my "Patronage and the Pisistratidae", and below, Ch. V. Only Hyginus includes "Theseus Aegei filius Antiopam Amazonam Martis filiam ex responso Apollonis" in his list of those "qui coniuges suas occiderunt" *(Fab.* 241). Antiope here features in a catalogue of wives ("coniuges"). The reference to Apollon's instruction is unique. Hyginus also calls Otrere the "coniunx" of Mars in her role as the founder of the temple in Ephesos (*Fab.* 225, 2). Nor can the relation of Kadmos with an Amazon in the extraordinary story of "Palaiphatos" (see below, n. 250) be regarded as a regular marriage.

Ares turns out to be an outsider whose paternal role is confined to that of the genitor. This certainly leaves a patrilineal impress on his daughters—epic probably first only named Penthesileia after him, but later the Amazons were known collectively as "daughters of Ares"[180]—but this patrilineality does not really gain a foothold in the representation of the Amazons; procreation and descent remain peripheral to the image of the Amazons as a nation of women. This is probably an additional reason why the maternity of the Amazons is left in the dark too. There is no mother without a father, and no fatherhood without a man, while men have no place among the Amazons. In the time of Aischylos the Amazons were still [anandroi]. The post-archaic attempts to find a suitable mother for the Amazons locate her among the Nymphs[181] or among the Amazons themselves.[182] Among the anomalous Amazons, Ares' role as father remains anomalous.

This state of affairs is connected with a (male) Greek myth, which is attested in various forms.[183] It is based on the idea that human procreation is not dependent on the joint physical efforts of men and women. One version represents the (male) human being as born from the ground, and describes procreation as the dissemination of male seed which only uses the body of the female as a sowing field.[184] Paternity is regarded as an active principle, while maternity is treated as a passive factor in procreation. This view probably arose when it became necessary to make the fleeting characterization of the Amazons in epic as [antianeirai] less vague. The anthropomorphic genesis of the Amazons required the introduction of a father for more than one reason, for not only is a genitor needed if progeny is to result,[185] but the character of the Amazons as [antianeirai] demanded an extremely masculine father.[186] These interpretations of the role of Ares as father are clearly far removed from the representation of the Amazons in the epic formula,[187] and the same is true of other—genealogical—variants of the Amazonology.

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[180] Schol. Hom. *Il.* III, 189 (schol.ex.). Here Harmonia is the mother of the Amazons, Otrere is only the mother of Penthesileia, and no father of Penthesileia is mentioned. The fact that Hyginus (*Fab.* 30 and 62) gives Mars as the father of Penthesileia and Hippolyte with Otrere as their mother is curious in the light of the genealogy of the Amazons, in which Ares is only too often credited with their paternity. These lines of descent should therefore not be taken too literally. They represent different ways in which the paternity of Ares has been deployed in the mythico-genealogical tradition. The ethnographical versions of their descent (Amazons as Sauromatians, etc.) developed at a later stage.

[181] Harmonia, Schol. Hom. *Il.* III, 189 (discussed above, Ch. II). There are Amazon names which are associated with Nymphs, such as Antiope (resembling the daughter of the river Asopos and the mother of Zethos and Amphion, *Od.* XI, 260–265); Smyrna (whose name corresponds to that of the mother of Adonis, Myrrha or Smyrna); Myrina (buried beneath the Hill of the Thicket); on the last two names and their mythical associations see Detienne, *Les Jardins d'Adonis.*

[182] Usually Otrere, see Hyg. *Fab.* 30, 10; 62, 4–5, 225, 2.

[183] In hexameter poetry *Il.* II, 547ff., Hes. *Th.* 590ff. and other passages.

[184] See above, p. 182. Another version takes men and women to have separate lines of descent, as in the myth of Deukalion and Pyrrha and in a variant of the Pandora motif. On these myths see e.g. N. Loraux, *Les enfants d'Athéna. Idées athéniennes sur la citoyenneté et la division des sexes*, Paris 1981;

These genealogical interpretations must assume that the Amazons are not averse to men as sexual partners, otherwise every act of sexual intercourse with an Amazon would be an act of rape. Bion of Prokonnesos (late third century B.C.) takes this theme to the limit in characterizing the Amazons as [philandroi]; far from fleeing at the approach of Theseus, they even send him gifts of hospitality.[188] In the Hellenistic story of Thalestris'

P. Mason, "Third Person/ Second Sex. Patterns of Sexual Asymmetry in the *Theogony* of Hesiodos".

[185] One of the rare examples of the birth of a female figure without male intervention is the genesis of Pegasos and Chrysaor from the blood of Medousa, Hes. *Th.* 280–285, though this is not an anthropomorphic genesis. Besides, Poseidon's intercourse with Medousa is mentioned just before (278–279), so that at least a glimpse of paternity is still preserved in the myth. The Deukalion and Pyrrha variant does not entail anthropomorphic genesis either, since it envisages the creation of human beings from stones.

[186] On the incorporation of these views in the theories of Aristoteles and others, see G.E.R. Lloyd, *Science, Folklore and Ideology. Studies in the Life Sciences in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge/ London etc. 1983, part II, "The Female Sex: Medical Treatment and Biological Theories in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.", pp. 58–111. The writings of Aristoteles and his contemporaries bear witness to a different view, in which the woman's contribution to the making of the child is assigned to a sort of female sperm, though of a less influential kind than male semen. Various combinations of male and female seed are taken to result in various kinds of children. Lloyd sums up the character of one of these types as follows: "When female seed from the male overcomes male seed from the female, the women are more brazen and are called 'manly', [andreiai].", p. 91.

[187] The relatively late date of these interpretations can also be seen from the representative selection of sources on Ares' paternity of the Amazons cited in this section. Only the formula in the *Aithiopis*, which merely initiates the genealogy, antedates the classical period.

[188] *FGrHist* 14 F 2; *FGrHist* 332 F 2. Klügmann interprets this passage as an indication that non-Attic writers tried to tone down Theseus' achievement in abducting an Amazon, *Die Amazonen in der attischen Literatur und Kunst*,

proposal to Alexandros the Great, the question of the sexual desires of the Amazons and their perpetuation has been taken as far as it can go: the Amazon queen herself takes the initiative toward the only man whom she can regard as her equal.

Interpretations of this kind, of which only a few have been mentioned here by way of illustration, are not found earlier than the fifth century. However, they bring out the basic contradiction of the image of the Amazons more clearly than was possible in the epic material. The physical existence of the Amazons, expressed in sexuality, procreation and kinship, is incompatible with the warriorlike nature that is inherent in their image, for while the former requires the presence of men, the latter rules it out. Each of the resulting solutions breaks the image of the Amazons down into the most divergent elements. In the Amazonology which recognises the Amazons an ethnographic identity, concern for the procreation of the people as a whole is the dominant factor. The etymological interpretation of [Amazoon] as [a-mastos] is a counterpart to this view by focusing attention on the body of the Amazons. The genealogical commentators apparently assign the Amazons a physical origin. The designation of Ares as their father is the first, arresting example in this process. While at first Ares' role seemed to solve the question of the origin of the Amazons in the familiar terms of epic, its introduction irrevocably articulated the paradoxes of the existence of the Amazons which had been latent until then. To sum up, the classical and post-classical interpretations attempted to control the notion of "martial women" by breaking this down into elements and then relating these elements to bodily functions.

Since it still remains debatable, however, whether the paradox of the Amazons elicited the same reactions in the archaic period, we have to return to epic. Although Ares is a marked physical presence in the Homeric epics, with a gigantic body

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pp. 21ff. esp. p. 22. However, one could just as well argue that Theseus is implicitly acquitted of abduction and rape by Bion, resulting in a restoration of his reputation. Jacoby ad 332 F 2 points out the resemblance of Bion's version to the story of the rape of Io as narrated in Herodotos I, 1; Bion's Theseus is not as idealized as the Attic texts presented him. I do not consider that this passage is primarily intended to indicate a political rivalry, as Klügmann is led to suppose; it is above all concerned with the contradictions inherent in the image of the Amazons itself.

and a booming voice, who is faster than any god or mortal[189] and who even makes an appearance as a lover,[190] he is above all the personification of martial violence and the lust for fighting. It is therefore understandable that Ares takes part in the war on both sides. He lends the Achaian and Trojan heroes the strength to accomplish the [aristeia] by inspiring and dominating the [thumos] of the men at war. His power is demonstrated when he induces a mental condition in a warrior that lends him superhuman strength. The violence and mental state personified by Ares are often compared with madness: [aphroon]; [mainomai].[191] Ares controls first and foremost a warrior's [thumos], the point of entry to his body.

The Homeric epics clearly show that Ares represents an element that is both essential and undesirable. War is inevitable, and given its inevitability, it even becomes attractive because of the enticement of lust for battle and glory. The warriors can only achieve their most with the assistance of Ares. The recognition of the necessity of Ares can be found in his position in Olympos, where as the child of Zeus and Hera he belongs at the heart of the divine family.[192] However, battle is also terrible and destroys what mortals hold dear. Ares recognises no [themis];[193]

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[189] *Il.* XXI, 407; V 860; *Od.* VIII 331.

[190] His faux pas with Aphrodite, *Od.* VIII 267 ff.

[191] E.g. *Il.* V, 761; XV, 606; *Od.* XI, 537; cf. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death*, pp. 34ff; for Mars in a similar role, see H.S. Versnel, "Apollo and Mars One Hundred Years after Roscher", (*Visible Religion* 4/5, 1985/6, pp. 134–172, and) in *Inconsistencies* 2, p. 290–384.

[192] In many respects Ares' counterpart is Aphrodite. Sexual passion [eroos] is necessary and even attractive, but it can also be a disruptive force, as illustrated by Aphrodite's role in the abduction of Helene by Paris. Aphrodite can also weaken the ability of the [thumos] to form a judgement and can affect the body by means of the [thumos]. Both Aphrodite and Ares are most at home on the periphery of Greek territory: Kypros (Aphrodite) and Thrake (Ares). Their illegitimate amours are therefore quite in keeping. On the liminality of Aphrodite see P. Friedrich, *The Meaning of Aphrodite*, Chicago/London 1978; for specifically psychological interpretation of this disruptive element see P. Diel, *Symbolism in Greek Mythology. Human Desire and its Transformations*, Boulder/London 1980 (orig. ed. Paris 1966); for the negative evaluation of [aphrodisia] as disruptive of physical balance and mental autonomy in the classical period, see M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité. 2. L'usage des plaisirs.*

[193] Il. V 761, where Hera calls her son [aphroona touton [. . .] hos ou tina oide themista]. Compare the Kyklopes, *Od.* IX 105–115, who are twice described as lacking in respect for [themis] or [themistès], while each of them establishes a [themis] for himself, his womenfolk and his children. On Themis—what is right, the law—see e.g. L. Gernet, "Droit et prédroit en Grèce ancienne"

this is a logical consequence of his character, since an excess of [thumos] makes it impossible to arrive at a balanced judgement.[194]

This is the function in which Ares features in epic, is called the father of male heroes, and of a daughter, Penthesileia. In view of the parallels of [Arèios] mentioned above and the common epithet "son of Ares" to refer to someone's quality as a warrior, it can be said that as the god of war Ares brings about the lust for battle because he is its personification.[195] By analogy with the male heroes, the epithet "daughter of Ares" refers primarily to Penthesileia's resemblance to Ares, her lust for and ability in battle, her [thumos]. The *Iliad* follows the rule that the epithet [megathumos]—with great courage [thumos]—is only applied to men and to nations.[196] It would therefore in principle be inappropriate for Penthesileia. The same applies to the adjective [megalètoor], which means more or less the same as [megathumos]. It is applied to Ares himself in the line which introduces the story of Penthesileia, though it does not belong to the tradition of the *Iliad* as an epithet of the god of war. "Daughter of Ares" approximates [megathumos] and [megalètoor] in meaning. The genealogical interpretation can be taken as a metaphor for the epithet [antianeira].

The other epithet applied to Penthesileia, "of Thrakian [genos]", implies that she belonged to an aristocratic, patrilineal family of Thrakian origin. What are the implications of the epithet "Thrakian"?

In the *Iliad* the Thrakians are allies of the Trojans. They appear in the catalogue of Trojan allies (II, 816–877) as various [ethnè] which lived on the banks of the Hellespont. This catalogue is not a description of a mythical region, but it would appear to present a politico-cultural perspective on the (north)western coast of Asia Minor with which the Greeks had become familiar after their settlement there.[197] It is therefore hardly surprising

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in Anthropologie de la Grèce antique, Paris 1976², pp. 175–260, esp. pp. 243ff; H. Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1983², and the exceptional, though no longer accepted interpretation by Harrison, *Themis. A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion.*

[194] Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus*, pp. 14, 16–20; and C.P. Caswell, *A Study of THUMOS in Early Greek Epic*, Leiden 1990, p. 50.

[195] See e.g. *Il.* XVII, 210; II, 440.

[196] There is one formulaic exception, in the *Odyssey*: [dia megathumon Athènèn] at the end of the hexameter; *Od.* VIII 520; XIII 121. On [megathumos] see above, p. 124 n.6 520; For the analogy between men and nations, see Ch. II.

[197] Cf. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, pp. 122ff; R. Drews, "The Earliest Greek

that neither the Amazons nor the Aithiopians are to be found in the catalogue, while it does contain the Phrygians, with whom Priamos claimed to have had relations of alliance long before the siege of his city.[198] The narrators of Greek epic must have found it only natural that the peoples whom they encountered in Western and North-Western Anatolia were allies of the Trojans *illo tempore.*[199]

In the *Iliad*, the territory of Thrake[200] covers an area corresponding to modern European Turkey plus the northwestern corner of Anatolia. The people who are now collectively known as the Thrakians lived in a much larger territory, extending far north of modern Bulgaria and Romania into Southern Russia.[201] The Greeks made some acquaintance with this "Thracia maior" in the course of the sixth century, but the Greek knowledge of Thrake is striking for its paucity.[202] The changing perspective on

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Settlements on the Black Sea", *JHS* 96, 1976, pp. 18–31; p. 22; these interpretations regard the Trojan Catalogue as a description of the area in question as the Greeks knew it in the eighth century, thus refuting the hypothesis of the Mykenaian origin of this catalogue. Onomastic confirmation of this interpretation can be found in A. Scherer, "Nichtgriechische Personennamen der Ilias," in H. Görgemanns and E.A. Schmitt, eds. *Studien zum antiken Epos*, Meisenheim am Glan 1972. Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie, 72, pp. 32–45; the fact that the Lydians are not included in this picture of Western Anatolia, Scherer p. 44, offers a vague chronological indication for a terminus ante quem, since the rise of the Lydian empire dates from the middle of the seventh century. See too G.M.A. Hanfmann, *From Croesus to Constantine. The Cities of Western Asia Minor and their Arts in Greek and Roman Times*, Ann Arbor 1975.

[198] Priamos and the Phrygians are discussed in Ch. IV. The Phrygians were of Thrakian origin; on their migrations and influence see e.g. J.G.P. Best, *Thracian Peltasts and their Influence on Greek Warfare*, Groningen 1969, pp. 14–15. We can therefore conclude that the Homeric usage of "Thrakians" refers to a selection of all those peoples whom present-day historians would now call Thrakian. For instance, Dolon, *Il.* X, 431–434, distinguishes the Phrygians from the Thrakians ("here are the Thrakians, new come, separate, beyond all others in place", 434), but describes them both as peoples who fight on horseback.

[199] For a survey of the peoples living there and of Greek contacts with them, see J.M. Cook, *The Greeks in Ionia and the East*, London 1962; Hanfmann, *From Croesus to Constantine*; J. Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas. Their early Colonies and Trade*, London 1980^2, pp. 84ff.

[200] Under the name of Thrakians e.g. *Il.* II, 595; 844; as Paionians II, 848ff.

[201] On Thrake and contact with Greece see A. Fol and I. Marazov, *Thrace and the Thracians*, London 1977; *Het Goud der Thraciërs. Archeologische schatten uit het bezit van 25 musea in Bulgarije.* Exhibition Catalogue Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-Van Beuningen 1984; Ch. Danov, "Zu den politischen und kulturellen Beziehungen zwischen Thrakern und Hellenen", *QuS* 1, 1975, pp. 67–81; Best, *Thracian Peltasts*, 1969.

[202] Hekataios had an impression of the enormous extent of Thrakian territory,

the borders of Thrake can be seen in the contrast between the epic view that the territory on the northern shore of the Hellespont was the far North, the land of Boreas,[203] and the Herodotean view which situates the North beyond the Arimaspoi, much further from the known world.[204] All the same, Herodotos has remarkably little to say about the Thrakians after two centuries of colonial contact, certainly by comparison with other peoples like the Skythians or the Egyptians.

This was largely due to the bitter hostility borne by the Thrakians towards other peoples. Thrakian warriors were a permanent threat on the North-Eastern border areas of the world of Greece and Asia Minor. It must have been difficult for disciplined armies like the hoplites of the Greek [poleis] and the troops of the monarchies of Asia Minor to get to grips with what might anachronistically be referred to as the guerrilla-like tactics of small, loosely constituted groups of Thrakians. There was good reason to associate the Thrakians with martial spirit, border territories, a remote existence,[205] and the threat of invasion.[206]

Nevertheless, the reports on Thrake present a type of image[207] which is better known from classical Greek ethnography and

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but he offers hardly any data on the location or the population, see Pearson, *Early Ionian Historians*, pp. 56–57; cf. *FGrHist* 1 F 34.

[203] *Il.* IX, 5.

[204] Hdt. III, 116. In between should be situated the fabulous travel account of Aristeas of Prokonnesos, see *EGF* ed. Davies, pp. 81–88 and Bolton, *Aristeas*, p. 40; and the increasing colonization of the territory to the north of the Black Sea, see A.X. Kocybala, *Greek Colonization on the North Shore of the Black Sea in the Archaic Period*, Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania 1978; she dates Aristeas' journey to the second half of the seventh century, *Greek Colonization*, p. 102; cf. W. Burkert, "Herodot als Historiker fremder Religionen", in *Hérodote et les peuples non grecs*, Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique, XXXV, Fondation Hardt, Vandoeuvres-Genève 1990, pp. 1–32, who dates the *Arimaspeia* to ca. 600 B.C. on p. 10.

[205] [eschatoi alloon] *Il.* X, 434; cf. [eschatoi androon] *Od.* I, 23, at the same position in the hexameter, referring to the Aithiopians.

[206] See too Ch. G. Starr, *The Origins of Greek Civilization, 1100–650 BC*, New York 1961, p. 274; A.R. Burn, *The Lyric Age of Greece*, London 1978², pp. 97ff.

[207] There is general agreement that the opposition between Greeks and barbarians hardly features at all in epic, and certainly does not have any of the prominence that it was to attain in the classical period; cf. J. Werner, "Kenntnis und Bewertung fremder Sprachen bei den Antiken Griechen I. Griechen und "Barbaren": zum Sprachbewusstsein und zum ethnischen Bewusstsein im frühgriechischen Epos", *Philologus* 133, 1989, pp. 169–176; but the fact that foreign peoples may be used as hooks on which to hang mythical and

from later travel accounts and ethnographica.[208] This mode of representation entails the description of other peoples by virtue of their difference from one's own identity, while the only terms available for the description of their alterity are themselves derived from that same identity. By representing itself by means of its opposite—the Other—self produces its own confirmation. This Other is a projection, and need not be an accurate representation of genuine others. This image may incorporate real features of others, but its essential contours are a form of self-representation by negation.[209] Moreover, alterity can be placed on a sliding scale from minimal difference to absolute opposition. In the case of the image of Thrake, we are presented with a sharp opposition (with regard to sexual mores) and a version marked by excess (as a caricature of Thrakian belligerence).[210]

While Greek tradition held that the Greek divinities connected with Thrake, especially Ares, Dionysos and Artemis, owed their origin, or at least some aspects of it, to Thrakian culture,[211] the Thrakian features are not the most decisive facet. A common

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thus in a certain sense projected images is evident from the archaic period. Fourth-century Attic orators constantly refer to the invasion of Attika, with or before the Amazons, by the former enemies the Thrakians as a regular prelude to the Persian invasion. This mythical image was not eliminated or eroded by the historical fact that Thrake had been exposed to Greek domination since the seventh century; that Thrakians had functioned as auxiliaries in Athens, cf. Best, *Thracian Peltasts*; and that many of them had been kept as slaves—Thrakian women were particularly popular as nannies, cf. Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas*, p. 238.

[208] See e.g. Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote*; idem, "Les Grecs égyptologues" in *Annales ESC* 41, 1986, 953–967; Mason, *Deconstructing America*. These representations and the brief account of this construction of the Other in Humphreys, "Women in Antiquity", in *The Family, Women and Death*, met name in Appendix I "Greeks and 'Others'", pp. 51–54 are discussed above, p. 126ff. It is not by coincidence that Humphreys' discussion of ethnography follows an article on women in antiquity; the question of the construction of the Other was and is applicable to both categories.

[209] One can more readily recognize this process if the Other is represented in a completely improbable way, as in the case of the Plinian races. All the same, it is important to recognize the importance of the same process in representations which appear to be realistic, for example by incorporating genuine elements of the others. See Hartog, *Le miroir*, (on the Skythians), Mason, *Deconstructing America*, and "Classical Ethnography".

[210] On oppositions see DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons*; Tyrrell, *Amazons*; inversion and extensions of the image of self in Hartog, *Le miroir*; for an account of these two ways of perceiving difference see Mason, "Ethnography" and *Deconstructing America*.

[211] See Marazov in Fol and Marazov, *Thrace*, Chs. 1 and 2.

and remarkable characteristic of the cults of Dionysos and Thrakian Artemis is their ecstatic worship, which recalls the ecstatic effect of Ares on the [thumos] of warriors. It is this association with excess and freedom from constraint which dominates the Greek representation of Thrake; the actual content of the Thrakian cults did not have any impact of Greek perceptions.[212] For the Greeks, the Thrakian deities represent above all the excessive Thrakian [thumos].[213] Vice versa, representations of everything Thrakian are coloured by that perspective, so that an excessive thirst for battle and an extreme lack of moderation are taken to be Thrakian characteristics.[214]

Greek representations of Thrake are thus products of the construction of the Other. This is the framework within which the image of the Amazons is created. Each of the deities mentioned is associated with the Amazons sooner or later: first Ares; then Artemis, who was worshipped in Thrake as Potnia Thèroon and had a special connection with the Nymphs;[215] and finally Dionysos, who features as both opponent and ally of the Amazons.[216] Accompanied by female followers, later known as "maenads", Dionysos has his counterpart in Ares with his "daughters", the Amazons. A passage in the *Iliad* (VI, 130–140) recounts how Lykourgos expels the women who are [mainomenai] dedicated to Dionysos from his territory. The gods are very resentful of Lykourgos' treatment of one of their company. Zeus blinds the offender and soon afterwards Lykourgos meets his end because he was "hated by all gods". Only sixty lines later, exactly the same formula is used to describe the fate of Bellerophontes, who had killed the Amazons.[217]

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[212] See Fol and Marazov, *Thrace*, passim. Apollon as the god of immortality and [manteia] was also associated with Thrake because of his connections with the Hyperboreans and the North; cf. H. Siegert, *Auf den Spuren der Thraker. Wo einst Apollo lebte*, Frankfurt am Main, 1979^2, and on the Thrakian cults of the Hero who comes back to life see Marazov, in Fol and Marazov, *Thrace*.

[213] "The less palatable half of the warrior function was then left to be absorbed by one or another of the war demons who inspired the marauding bands [. . .]. One of those might well have been the Thracian Ares, whose locale—if not his name—allowed this distasteful aspect of the warrior complex to be relegated to convenient exile. From there, under the onomastic umbrella of the *interpretatio graeca*, a number of local warrior gods from places such as Scythia became known as "Ares" [. . .]"; Strutynski, "Ares", p. 226.

[214] The counterpart of excessive thirst for battle is extreme alcoholism—the preserve of Dionysos. The Thrakians were reputed to be always drunk, see Fol, *Thrace*, p. 80; on the perception of excessive drinking, see F. Graf, "Milch, Honig und Wein", in *Perennitas. Studi in Onore di Angelo Brelich*, Rome 1980, pp. 209–221, and for diet as a symbol of one's mental state see Foucault, *L'usage des plaisirs*; see also above, p. 132ff. The relation between Amazons, Thrake and alcoholism is also evidenced by the remarkable eponymous myth of Sinope, as transmitted by Hekataios and Andron of Theos, *FGrHist* 1 F 34; *FGrHist* 802 F 3; see above, pp. 153–154. The same procedure—a mythologizing projection which can be attached to the realia of the people in question—probably applies to the owning of horses by the Thrakians. Many characteristics which were attributed to the Thrakians were transferred to the Skythians, such as their penchant for drinking; see e.g. Anakreon ed. Gentili no. 33. The parallelism between Thrakians and Skythians was furthered by the notion that the Istros bounded both nations; see Hartog, *Le miroir*, p. 85.

[215] On the other hand, it is not always correct to relate sanctuaries of

This representation of Thrake in epic can be supplemented with details from the visual record from the sixth century.[218] The first representation of an Amazon on horseback (Penthesileia **no. 8**) can be interpreted in this context: the well-documented interest in horses at this time corresponds to the interest in Thrakians, who are often represented on horseback.[219] We can observe a special relationship between the Amazons and the

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Artemis and Apollon which are associated with the Amazons in later testimonia to Thrake. For instance, Pausanias (III, xxv, 3) describes the temples of Apollon Amazonios and of Artemis Astrateia, whose name is taken to derive from the fact that the Amazons ended their journey through Greece at this point. The wooden statues in the two temples were supposed to have been dedicated by the Amazons. On these cultic sites see Bennett, *Religious Cults associated with the Amazons.*

[216] Dionysos as opponent of the Amazons, e.g. Plout. *Mor.* 303, D–E, an eponymous story about Panhaima on Samos; as ally, see above, p. 157. These are relatively late (Hellenistic) stories. Representations of the Amazons and Dionysos in one and the same scene are not found before the Roman era: Dionysos as opponent, *LIMC* s.v. Amazones nos. 248–249; Dionysos as ally, *LIMC* s.v. Amazones nos. 250–252. In Attic black-figure painting, however, the Amazons and Dionysos often feature as themes on a single vase.

[217] [apèchtheto pasi theoisin] VI, 140; 200. On the relation between the Amazons and Artemis in the story of Bellerophontes, see below, Ch. IV.

[218] Shapiro, "Amazons, Thracians, and Scythians"; see also Ch. V.

[219] On this visual material see T.B.L. Webster, *Potter and Patron in Classical Athens*, London 1972, pp. 179–195. Although I cannot agree with Webster's thesis on the special interests or preferences of the Hippeis (on this problem in general see my "Patronage and the Pisistratidae"), his survey does provide good documentation on the interest in the possession and use of horses, an activity of the "leisure class" which is not immediately connected with waging war. For the presence of Thrakians in sixth-century Athens and their representation in vase-painting, see Best, *Thracian Peltasts*, pp. 5ff. On the representation of Amazons as Thrakian peltasts, see ibidem, pp. 10–11 and below, Ch. V.

followers of Dionysos in the various representations of Amazons wearing a panther skin, for in the sixth century this attribute referred to wildness and to the maenads.[220] The close association of maenadism with Thrake illustrates that the distinction between self and Other is not always an absolute opposition. Although maenadism belongs to the area outside the boundaries of the developing [polis], it is firmly situated within Greek culture. Rather than being opposed to it, it takes place on the outermost edge of the Greek cultural world, where Dionysos holds sway. The same is true of the Amazons, for as daughters of Ares they belong genealogically to the Greek world, but to its very edge, where it is not the [nomos] of the [polis] which rules, but unfettered [thumos]. This domain, over which the god of war rules, has a place on the cultural map—Thrake.

Finally, it is worth considering two texts which illuminate a particular aspect of the epic representation of Thrake and its god of war, Ares. The first is the passage on the Thrakians in Book V of Herodotos' *Histories*, a transitional point between the presentation of the main ingredients of Herodotos' vision (in Books I–IV) and those books (VI–IX) in which he develops these views in the account of the actions of Greeks and non-Greeks.[221] Herodotos' opinion is that Egypt and Asia are civilized but unfree, while Thrake is free but uncivilized; only the Greek [polis] is both free and civilized. The brief passage on the Thrakians (V, 3) which serves as an introduction to the theme of the growth of tyranny, focuses on the contrast between freedom and subjection to [nomos]. The Thrakians are extremely numerous and would be very powerful if only they could observe a single [nomos]. However, their weakness is due to their inability to do so. Moreover, Herodotos points out that the Thrakian [nomos] fails to distinguish between freedom and constraint in the field of sexual and social mores in a way that is acceptable to the Greeks. Young Thrakian girls are not chaperoned, but are free to dally with any man they choose.[222] Furthermore, although some tribes are polygamous, the Thrakians exert strict control of all married women, which the men acquire through the payment of a high bride price (V, 4–6).

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[220] See Shapiro, "Amazons", pp. 108ff. The spotted animal skin antedates the sixth century; see below, pp. 357–359. For various forms of such representations see T. H. Carpenter, *Dionysian Imagery in Archaic Greek Art. Its Development in Black-Figure Vase-Painting*, Oxford 1986, pp. 64ff. The representations of Gigantomachies discussed there feature Dionysos and his followers with a panther skin, while Artemis wears a lion skin. On the substitution of maenads for the original Nymphs in the retinue of Dionysos in the second half of the sixth century see Carpenter, *Dionysian Imagery*, p. 80. See also S. McNally, "The Maenad in Early Greek Art", *Arethusa* 11, 1978, pp. 101–136.

[221] S. Bernardete, *Herodotean Inquiries*, The Hague 1969. Bernardete's views are supported by the analyses by Pembroke, "Women in Charge", Rossellini and Saïd, "Usages de femmes", Hartog, *Le miroir*.

We can appreciate the significance of this passage more fully if we concentrate on the language Herodotos uses. The key concepts are [eroos], [thumos] and [logos]: the Thrakians have their own [nomoi], but their [thumos] is so excessive that it cannot be guided by [logos] towards a [themis] that is acceptable to all. This inability has its parallel in the incapacity of tyrants to check their [eroos] for power;[223] if the [logos] is unable to guide the [thumos] and bring about the discipline required of a good citizen, [eroos] can take over.[224]

It can be seen that this discussion is couched in the terminology of epic (with [logos] taking the place of [phrenes]).[225] As we have seen in connection with the role of Ares in inducing the lust for fighting, [thumos] is that instance where moods, emotions, internal drives and similar sensations are experienced. The feeling of inner compulsion is often assigned to divine influence,[226] but there is a close relation between [thumos] and [noös] or [phrenes], since the [thumos] requires the guidance of the understanding. In contrasting his view of tyranny with his idealized view of the balanced order of the classical [polis], Herodotos is certainly expressing a different mentality from that of epic and the early archaic period, but his discourse is rooted in those more ancient conceptions. The [thumos], which was the seat of the martial spirit, is given a civilized twist by making it the point of intersection of moods and reflections. Herodotos' account in Book V is based on the older representation of Thrake, but he uses it for his own ends in his treatment of the [polis].[227]

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[222] This view is also used in a sixth-century Greek context; see Anakreon's "Thrakian fillies" (ed. Gentili no. 78).

[223] Cf. H.S. Versnel *Unus; Isis, Dionysos, Hermes: Three Studies in Henotheism*, Leiden 1990, pp. 62–67, who demonstrates that Eroos and Ares possess precisely those arbitrary powers which can affect the position of the tyrant positively and negatively.

[224] "Herodotus uses Eroos in only two senses: sexual desire and the desire for tyranny. In every instance of sexual desire (except one) it is illegitimate [. . .]. Eroos, then, designates all private and illegal desires, whether they break the law in a sexual or a political way [. . .]. In Thumos [. . .] Herodotus sees the human basis for the maintenance of public justice. That it does not necessarily lead to the maintenance of justice he indicates by beginning this book [Book V] JB) with the Thracians, whose Thumos is so excessive that it produces anarchy rather than order. And yet he begins with them precisely because of their excessive Thumos, for it sets the underlying theme of Book V: the articulation of the private and the public in the light of the distinction between Eroos and Thumos. [. . .] The sense of right or wrong, then, seems to be based on the intimate connection between Logos and Thumos [. . .]." Bernardete, *Herodotean Inquiries*, pp. 137–138, 140.

[225] On similarities and differences between Herodotus and epic see Gould, *Herodotus*.

The second text to be considered here is a passage in Book II of the *Argonautika* of Apollonios of Rhodos (third century B.C.), an impressive example of neo-epic dealing with the voyage of Iason and his followers to distant Kolchis.[228] The Argonauts arrive at an island off the coast, close to the estuary of the Thermodon, where there is a shrine of Ares. This shrine belonged to the Amazon queens, Otrere and Antiope, who used to sacrifice there before setting out to do battle.[229] The Amazons lived near the Thermodon in three cities.[230] Later the Argonauts run the risk of encountering the Amazons, who were extremely dangerous enemies and who lived without [themis] in the plain of Doias. They were the daughters of Ares and Harmonia and did not live together in one city, but were scattered over the country in three groups, viz. those from Themiskyra, Lykasteia and Chadisia.[231] After a number of adventures in Amazon territory, the Argonauts sacrifice sheep to Ares on a black sacrificial stone in the shrine, where all the Amazons had their central cult in the past [pote]. However, the Amazons did not offer sheep or cattle to Ares, but horses, which they possessed in large quantities.[232]

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[226] See Caswell, *A Study of THUMOS*, esp. pp. 35ff. and pp. 49ff.; R. Padel, *In and Out of the Mind. Greek Images of the Tragic Self*, Princeton 1992.

[227] One might compare the interpretations of epic material, specifically the term [antianeirai], in the hands of Aischylos.

[228] On the incorporation of older material in this epic see C. R. Beye, *Epic and Romance in the Argonautica of Apollonius*, Carbondale 1982.

[229] *Argon.* II, 385–387. Here and at almost all other points the Amazons are called [Amazonides], a form which can be fitted into the hexameter much more easily. The chronology of the queens is accurate if we assume that the voyage of the Argonauts took place one generation before the Trojan war, for in the time of Apollonios Otrere was held to be the mother of Penthesileia. Elsewhere (e.g. II 774–779; 911–914; 964–974) it is evident that Herakles' quest to obtain the girdle of the Amazon queen Hippolyte is taken to be much more recent. Hippolyte is called the queen of Themiskyra in the same book.

[230] II, 369–376; the statement that they lived in cities is later retracted.

Many of the elements of this description can be recognized as typically "Thrakian": the descent from and cult of Ares; the possession of horses; martial spirit; blood sacrifices of the kind known from the Thrakian cult of Artemis; the lack of a central [polis]; and their lack of [themis]. Apollonios' diction is reminiscent of the Homeric account of the Kyklopes[233] and of Hesiodos' description of the Bronze Race[234]—a race [genos] which did not eat bread [siton] and which had a [kraterophroon thumos].[235] These characteristics must have reminded Apollonios of the Amazons, whose name was interpreted in the Hellenistic era as a privative alpha plus "bread" [maza]. Both [genè] were therefore lacking in agriculture and agricultural products. As for the epithet [kraterophroon], its combination with [thumos] is a *hapax legomenon*; in the Homeric epics it is used of heroic warriors and of a wild animal,[236] so that the association with Ares is a natural one.

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[231] II, 985-1001. The image of nomads has now supplanted the notion of city-dwellers. Apollonios now proceeds to deal with the neighbours of the Amazons, the Chalybes who work iron. Bolton regards the home of the Amazons as dependent on these Chalybes, for where iron is, the Amazons appear as neighbours of the Chalybes; *Aristeas*, pp. 47ff. However, Apollonios also mentions the Tybarenoi and the Mossynoikoi, and his account seems to based primarily on Xenophon's description of this region (*Anab.* V, v, 1-3; Chalybes and Tybarenoi). Xenophon relates (V, iv, 110) that the Mossynoikoi were considered by the Greeks as the most barbarian people they had ever come across because they did everything in public that other peoples regarded as a private affair, such as sexual intercourse, and vice versa. This inversion of norms is also a characteristic of the sexual mores of the Thrakians. Although this was the preserve of the Amazons *par excellence*, Xenophon never reported running into them.

[232] II, 1169-1176.

[233] [toison d' out' agorai boulèphoroi *oute themistes*], *Od.* IX, 112; [ou gar Amazonides mal' epètides, *oude themistas*] *Argon.* II, 988.

[234] [hoisin Arèos / erg' emelen stonoenta kai hubries], Hes. *Erga*, 145-146; [all' hubris stonoessa kai Areos erga memèlei] *Argon.* II, 989.

[235] Hes. *Erga*, 146-147. An important difference between this Bronze Race and the Amazons envisaged by Apollonios is the use of iron; it goes without saying that the Bronze Race lacked iron (*Erga*, 150-151), while Ps-Lysias (*Epit.* 4) credits the Amazons with being the only ones to have iron.

[236] Herakles *Il.* XIV, 324; Odysseus *Od.* IV. 333; the Dioskouroi *XI*, 299; a wild animal *Il.* X, 184.

In locating the Amazons near the Thermodon, however, Apollonios was attempting to solve a thorny problem. In epic the Amazons inhabited a vaguely defined area beyond Troy—a mythical territory lacking any precise location. Later on "Thrake" was introduced, and Skythia also featured as a possible site for the Amazons. In other words, the Amazons were gradually moved northwards from the narrowly defined "Thrake" in North-West Asia Minor to the more northernly territory on the coast of the Black Sea and finally to what is now Southern Russia.[237] In the fifth century, however, the sources unexpectedly come up with a completely different site as the home of the Amazons: Themiskyra on the Thermodon.[238] This remains the favourite home of the Amazons, who are still credited with a nomadic way of life,[239] until Hellenistic Amazonology dealt with the question of the location of the Amazons.[240] This Themiskyra is also subjected to change over time. While it is a plain in the fifth and fourth centuries, it later becomes a [polis]. The first literary reference to Themiskyra as a city is in a text attributed to Hagias of Troizen by Ploutarchos.[241] This view of Themiskyra as a city is absolutely incompatible with the older views of the home of the Amazons and of Themiskyra in particular.[242] But no matter how Themiskyra was represented, these later locations for the Amazons could no longer be regarded as "Thrakian".

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[237] Representations of Amazons fighting griffins are attested from the fourth century; see *LIMC* s.v. Amazones, 565–569. On many of these illustrations the Amazons wear a pelta and chiton. On other elements of this northern character see Ch. V.

[238] Hekataios *FGrHist* 1 F 7A. Judging from the extant testimonia, Hekataios did not associate Themiskyra with the Amazons; he did not mention it on his map of the world at all. Apparently no one was disturbed by the contradiction between the lack of respect for [themis] on the part of the Amazons and their location in Themiskyra. The earliest literary reference to Themiskyra as the home of the Amazons is in the *Prometheus Vinctus* (721–728), in which Prometheus describes the future migration of the Amazons from the North to Themiskyra opposite. At roughly the same time (ca. 450 B.C.) Pherekydes of Athens also mentioned Themiskyra *FGrHist* 3 F 15 a–c; Schol. Ap. Rh. II, 990 and 992 (= F 15 a and c) show that Pherekydes discussed both the descent from Ares and Harmonia and the location in Themiskyra, which is still regarded as a plain [pedion]. On the testimonia see also F. Brommer, *Theseus. Die Taten des Helden in der attischen Kunst und Literatur*, Darmstadt 1982, pp. 110–113, 115–119.

[239] See e.g. Hdt. IV, 110–117; Hellanikos of Lesbos, *FGrHist* 4 F 167a, (ca. 400) had reported that the Amazons crossed the Kimmerian Bosporos when it was frozen in order to reach the Greek mainland for their assault on Athens. This implies that Hellanikos still associated the Amazons with the far north. Jacoby is wrong to refer to the "alte mythische sitze am Thermodon" in his commentary on F 166–167, for the ancient mythical site was not there, but in North-Western Anatolia.

[240] Not only the northern regions of the Amazons were filled in with details and speculations, but the borders of the Mediterranean were gradually assigned a growing number of eponymous myths in Western Asia Minor, see Klügmann, "Ueber die Amazonen in den Sagen der kleinasiatischen Städte"; for Libya see Hanson, "The Myth of the Libyan Amazons"; for the connections of the (Libyan) Amazons with Atlantis (probably an indulgent invention by Dionysius Skythobrachion (ca. 150 B.C.), *FGrHist* 32 F 7, see Diod. Sic.

Apollonios' solution can thus be seen as an attempt to reconcile the fact that Penthesileia was "of Thrakian [genos]" and a "daughter of Ares" in the *Aithiopis* with these new suggestions. On the one hand, he gives his Amazons an unmistakably "Thrakian" allure; on the other hand, by situating them near the Thermodon, he accommodated the mythical representation of Thrake to the latest geographical speculations about the home of the Amazons.

Ambiguous Amazons

As we have seen, the oldest element of the Amazon motif is the formula [Amazones antianeirai], which expresses both the equivalence of the Amazons to men and their difference from men. While that ambivalent formula is little more than a bare outline, the figure of Penthesileia can be seen as an elaboration on that very ambivalence. On the one hand, the word [aristeia] which characterizes Penthesileia in the summary of the *Aithiopis* marks her out as an [aristos] who has obtained the [kleos] of a (male) hero. This masculinity, which was only latent in the formula [Amazones antianeirai], is also expressed in the descent from Ares, the god *par excellence* to evoke the martial nature of the Amazons. The [thumos] of the Amazon, which is responsible for her unbridled lust for battle, is a characteristic of males (and of the Thrakians).[243] On the other hand, despite the wearing

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III, 52–55; the main protagonist is now the Amazon queen Myrina, who is eventually killed by the Thrakians and the Skythians; for the southern tip of Italy see Lykophron, *Al.* 993–1007 (ed. Mooney) and Schol. Lyk. 995–999; on the dedication of Amazons to Artemis, Lyk. 1329–1340.

[241] See above, pp. 151–152.

[242] Incidentally, this is yet one more piece of evidence for the hypothesis that the story of Antiope, who betrayed the Amazon stronghold to Theseus from love for him, did not belong to ancient epic.

[243] Padel, *In and Out of the Mind*, pp. 27ff., 111ff. has shown that, in the

of (male) armour, the bodies of the Amazons remain female. Penthesileia's animal skin is evocative both of excess and of femininity through its association with the maenads. The parts of the body where the Amazon queen is wounded—the neck and the breast—are the very same ones by which women undergo violent death.[244]

This ambiguous nature of the epic Amazons, due to the presence of a male [thumos] inside a female body, has various aspects and consequences. First, it should be noted that there is no direct parallel in Greek mythology to this ambiguity of the Amazons. The Kentauroi are half-human, half-horse hybrids, a physical condition which is matched by their mental constitution.[245] The dual nature of half-male, half-female hermaphrodites is similarly inscribed in their physical state.[246] Genuine monsters are also physical composites, such as the Chimaira, which consists of three different creatures, or Medousa, a female with snakes for hair. There is nothing hybrid, however, about the bodies of the Amazons. Physically, they are women, while in terms of their [thumos] they are masculine—but both their masculinity and their femininity are expressed in human characteristics.[247]

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language of classical tragedy, [thumos] may acquire strongly feminine connotations because of its receptiveness and openness to impulses from outside. In Homeric epic and other forms of archaic and classical Greek discourse, however, the energy and activity ascribed to [thumos] imply its masculine quality. See also *ibid.* Ch. 2 on the potential of [thumos] to control its impulses and adjust them to reason—a feature lacking, as we saw, in the [thumos] of the Thrakians, the Amazons and, according to Herodotos, of tyrants.

[244] This applies both to Penthesileia and to the opponent of Herakles, usually identified as Andromache in vase-painting and as Hippolyte in the literary tradition; see Loraux, *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman*, pp. 60–61. In this connection, the tragedies probably refer to more ancient cultic practices in which a virgin, usually a girl, was sacrificed. In the light of the analysis by Maaskant, "The Stuff of which Greek Heroines are Made", and of names like Andromache and Andromeda, we may cautiously infer that the Amazons present us with "Epic Ways of Killing a Woman".

[245] On the Kentauroi see the extensive discussion in Roscher, *Lexikon*, s.v. Kentauren (Roscher); on their mentality see DuBois, *Centaurs*, passim.

[246] See M. Delcourt, *Hermaphrodite. Mythes et rites de la bisexualité dans l'Antiquité classique*, Paris 1958; on Teiresias, who was alternately male and female, see L. Brisson, *Le mythe de Tirésias*, Leiden 1976.

[247] To illustrate the ambiguity of the Amazons, Tyrrell, *Amazons*, pp. 93ff. compares them with androgynes, especially with Klytaimnestra, to show that, according to Greek norms, women were not expected to use weapons; those who went so far as to kill a man deserved to be killed themselves. A woman who kills a man is then no longer supposed to be a human being, but a

This humanity is connected with the genesis, development and function of the Amazons in the world of the epic heroes. Most of the elaborations on the ambiguity of the Amazons listed above date from the seventh century or later. The Thrakian character and the descent from Ares in epic, the association with maenads in vase-painting, can be seen as attempts to make this anomalous nation of women more specific. The Tiryns shield, which bears the earliest Amazonomachy on one side and a hunting horse-man on the other, indicates that the Amazons were associated with the world of exotic beings at the end of the eighth century.[248] The tradition which gave rise to the *Aithiopis* made use of this characteristic in its own way. It is not a coincidence that Penthesileia's duel with Achilles is sandwiched between Achilles' victories over Hektor and Memnon: Hektor is the masculine hero, Penthesileia is the Thrakian feminine hero, and Memnon is the male hero from elsewhere (Aithiopia). These three opponents of Achilles thus sum up every conceivable type of human who is equivalent to him in the epic scheme of values and thus may feature as an opponent, while representing his own world

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hybrid monster—at least, that is what Kassandra cries in Aischylos' *Agamemnon* when she foresees the killing of Agamemnon (*Ag.* 1231–1236). However, Klytaimnestra commits an act of murder, a single breach of the law of humans and gods, which men are not allowed to do either. What is more, she kills her husband and the father of her children; it is the role of Agamemnon as a father, in contrast to that of Klytaimnestra as a mother, which is one of the key themes of this tragedy. For a compact and original reading of masculinity and femininity in Greek tragedy, see G. Steiner, *Antigones*, Oxford 1984, pp. 237ff. The act in question is thus of a different kind from the act of killing in war, in which the Amazons excel. Indeed, Aischylos emphasizes the difference between Klytaimnestra's wielding of the axe to kill her husband and the deployment of weapons as the Amazons are entitled to use them. The use of weapons to kill is certainly a masculine activity, but to be killed by a weapon is also a masculine characteristic. This also applies to the various ways of committing suicide: hanging is typical for women, while killing oneself with a sword is a typically male death; see Loraux, *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman*, pp. 28–29, 75 and passim; and Steiner, *Antigones*, pp. 240–243. There is therefore little to be gained from regarding Klytaimnestra's condition at the fatal moment as one of androgyny in order to treat this condition itself as a breach which is punishable by death. The death of an Amazon cannot be regarded as an act of punishment either, and certainly not in the epic context in which death is also the fate of numerous male warriors. Tyrrell's confusions on this point are connected with the more general flaw in his work, viz. the use of classical interpretations of myth, especially those in the tragedies, as a point of entry to understanding the mythical representations of the (early) archaic era.

[248] On the Tiryns shield see below, p. 356ff.

and the world of others.[249] This human, heroic aspect may explain why the Amazons are never regarded as monsters, despite their exceptional character. Penthesileia is clearly distinguished from the monsters on the shield-strap reliefs, and the Amazons are never described as monsters in the ancient texts either.[250]

The Amazons are Others, for among the Greeks fighting is a man's job and a masculine [thumos] belongs in a male body. This does not mean that the Amazons are the absolute opposites of the Greeks. The male element in the Amazons is completely like that of Greek men: Ares inspires both the Amazons and Greek men to battle. However, the femininity of the Amazons is a potentially disruptive factor. In this respect the Amazons are as undisciplined as Thrakians, but on the field of battle they are human opponents worthy of equal respect, and their arms and armour are the same as those of the Greeks.[251] The representation of Amazons, including their descent from the Greek god of war, is fundamentally based on Greek values, and their acts in battle cannot be described without reference to the values of the Greek heroic code. Many of the Amazons have Greek names in the archaeological record, and numerous names are added to the older repertoire in the literary tradition.[252] In this respect, the combination of elements of self and Other displayed by the Amazons is typical of the way in which the Other is constructed.

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[249] M. Maaskant-Kleibrink pointed out the correspondence of this series of opponents of Achilles with the combat of Herakles against the Nemean Lion (earth), Stymphalian Birds (air) and Lernean Hydra (water). Like Achilles, Herakles overcomes every element—except the gods. On the modifications to the Amazons in connection with the Heraklean Amazonomachy, see below, Ch. V.

[250] The exception is an extremely curious text from the second half of the fourth century. Palaiphatos, who was the only author to suggest that the Amazons were men (see above, p. 30, offers an original view of the nature of the Sphinx. Kadmos went to Thebes with an Amazon woman called Sphinx. When Kadmos married another woman there, the Sphinx took money, men and Kadmos' dog and went into the mountains, which she used as a base for attacks on Kadmos and where she laid ambushes. The Kadmeans call ambushes "enigmas". Kadmos offered a sizeable reward to anyone who could kill the Sphinx. Oidipous managed to do so. *Peri Apistoon*, ed. Festa, fr. 4. In this "Euhemerist" version, the monstrous Sphinx has been transformed into an Amazon who, like a second Medeia or Antiope, wreaks vengeance on the man who took her with him and then abandoned her for a Greek wife.

[251] In this respect too the Amazons differ from the Kentauroi. Roscher, *Lexikon*, s.v. Kentauren, distinguishes various groups of Kentauroi. The first group consist of only two individual Kentauroi, Cheiron and Pholos, who have the same status as humans and who even fulfil the role of wise tutors. The other groups consist of various kinds of Kentauroi who operate collectively and are marked by their wild nature. These groups are the ones which feature in the stories of the battles of the Kentauroi, such as that with the Lapithoi. They usually fight with tree-trunks and sticks—not at all the weapons of the Greeks.

The Amazonology offers a relatively specific interpretation of the ambiguity of the Amazons. At the level of social organization, sexuality and kinship, the combination of masculinity and femininity poses problems which aroused attention from the classical period. The discussion, which is mainly confined to Greek scholarly literature, provides a picture of the intellectual response to the mythical tradition, which is also expressed in various ways in the visual arts from the second half of the sixth century and in the fifth-century Attic tragedies. The Amazon motif was certainly food for thought. Men are excluded from the Amazon community, the ancestor Ares has provided them with such a martial [thumos] that men are not required for the masculine function *par excellence*, fighting. As for the bodily, sexual component in procreation, this led to a range of interpretations, which I have called an Amazonology. Despite the elaborate nature of some of these interpretations, in the last resort they are limited in scope, merely tacked on to the original and essential ambiguity of the [Amazones antianeirai].[253] The Amazonology goes into detail with regard to the female bodies of the Amazons and their capacity for procreation. This concentration of attention has two main advantages. First, it offers an apparent solution to the problem of how an exclusively female people can survive in order to loom up time and again on the frontiers of the known world. Second, it detracts attention from the role of the Amazons as warriors with a masculine [thumos]. This may appear paradoxical, since the propagation of the Amazons is only problematical because their notorious belligerence rules out any "normal" marriage. Nevertheless, this focus on procreation relegates the warrior function to the background. It is precisely in their role as warriors that the Amazons set Greek men before an insoluble dilemma in terms of the heroic code of epic.

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[252] Individual names were also added to the large groups of wild Kentauroi in the course of time. One of the earliest and best known representations where many such names can be seen is the François vase (second quarter of the sixth century). See e.g. M. Robertson, *A Shorter History of Greek Art*, Cambridge etc. 1981, pp. 33–34 and pl. 47. On an amphora from the end of the seventh century, depicting Herakles fighting Nessos, both names are inscribed, Robertson, *Shorter History*, p. 33, pl. 46. Nevertheless, it would seem that the labelling of individual Amazons in large-scale battle scenes is commoner than the identification of Kentauroi, at any rate in Attic black-figure work, though the subject requires further investigation.

[253] Although Ephoros also poses a more general question: how is it possible for women to become Amazons and to perform the function of warriors? After all, human nature [phusis] is the same everywhere? Steph. Byz. *Ethnika*, s.v. Amazones.

It is a fundamental principle of Greek culture that men fight. In epic, a man encounters another man as his opponent on the field of battle, and recognizes him as sharing an essentially similar identity; indeed, their renown as heroes is dependent on this similarity. They both strive for the quality of [aristos], in life and after death. No projection onto the Other takes place here, for the other is essentially the same as ego. Victory falls to the one with the greatest prowess in battle; "were we two of the same age, and in this same spirit [thumos], soon he would win me in a great battle, or I would win him". The gods may strengthen or weaken the [thumos] of one of them and thereby affect the outcome, but the fundamental equality of the opponents is a precondition for all the other variations in epic heroism.

This principle of equality is disturbed by the entry of a woman to the field of battle. A woman is different in two ways: in terms of physical difference, which can result in relations betwen the sexes on the basis of [philia] or [eroos]; and in terms of a qualitative difference between masculinity and femininity, which is emphatically presented as exclusive because this distinction is never essential or complete.

The exceptional situation in which a woman enters the fray only occurs in the *Iliad* in the case of Amazons or goddesses. Aphrodite—a goddess who is feminine in both senses of the word—appears twice on the field of battle, where she joins in the fighting. One of these scenes is highly unusual, since it involves two goddesses. In the battle of the gods (Book XXI) Aphrodite is confronted by her half-sister, Pallas Athena. Athena is physically a woman, but her [thumos] is masculine.[254] She is so independent that not even Aphrodite's [eroos] can have any effect on her, and so superior in battle that she vanquishes Ares (XXI, 391–414). Pallas Athena wounds Aphrodite in the breast,[255] wherupon the goddess of love leaves the fighting (XXI, 424). In the other scene, a mortal, male hero pits himself against Aphrodite. When Aineias is in mortal danger, his mother comes to his assistance and confronts Diomedes (V, 310ff.). He wounds her in the hand with which she protects her son, and calls after her as she flees:

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[254] She is the only woman to be called [megathumos]. The application of the epithet [antianeira] to Athena by Colluthus Epicus, modelled on the ancient epic epithet [antianeirai] for the Amazons, is an indication of an

> Give way, daughter of Zeus, from the fighting and the terror. It is not then enough that you lead astray[256] women without warcraft?[257] Yet, if still you must haunt the fighting, I think that now you will shiver even when you hear some other talking of battles.
>
> (*Il.* V, 347–351)

Diomedes drives from the battle-field not only the goddess of [eroos], but the embodiment of femininity, inconstant by nature and incapable of [andreia]. His words give voice to his own masculinity. Is he afraid that this might be undermined?[258] The male body is an indication of the ultimate quality of [andreia], but it does not guarantee it. In general it may be concluded that a man or a woman may combine both aspects of the different sexes, but that the sex of the body never offers absolute certainty about sex as a psychical quality.

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analogous representation of Athena and the Amazons as females with a masculine [thumos], though the fact that Athena is divine, while the Amazons are mortals, is naturally of crucial importance.

[255] [stèthea], with both a physical meaning and as the seat of the emotions, comparable to [thumos].

[256] [èperopeuoo], lead astray, talk into (doing something wrong), connected with [phrenas], *Od.* XIII, 327 and with [phrenas gunaiksin], *Od.* XV, 421.

[257] [analkis]; connected with [aptolemos] *Il.* I, 201; and with [thumos], XVI, 355.

[258] "[. . .] there is a strain of anxious self-alienation in Diomedes' expulsion of Aphrodite. The overriding need of a battling warrior is to be strong and unyielding; hence the ever-present temptation (which is also a desire) to be weak. This is most fully expressed at *Iliad* 22.111–30, where Hektor views laying down his weapons to parley with Achilles as effeminate and erotic. Diomedes' hostility to Aphrodite (= the effeminate and erotic) is a kind of scapegoating, his affirmation of an ideal of masculine strength against his *own* possible "weakness". Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire*, p. 175. On the tension between fear and desire for battle, see Redfield, *The Tragedy of Hector* and Renehan, "The *Heldentod*".

From this perspective, fighting a woman is threatening to masculine identity, and thus culturally abject behaviour. A man should not take up arms against a female opponent because a woman is an unworthy opponent and the killing of a woman is in principle a shameful act. The Amazons are anomalous in this respect, since they are women who nevertheless take up arms. Greek men can only treat them as worthy opponents because the Amazones are [antianeirai]. This means that attention has to be focused on the masculine aspect of the Amazons, while their femininity, as embodied in their physique, has to be removed from sight, for example by covering it with a breastplate. Paradoxically, what was so emphasized and vaunted in the tradition—the fact that the Amazons are women—had to remain hidden. This ambivalence was also a feature of the epic formula: the physical, feminine and thus potentially sexual aspect of the Amazons was subordinated, in the series of connotations evoked by the formula, to their actions as warriors.

The dilemma, however, does not stop here. At death, the [thumos] and the [psuchè] leave the body. The latter goes to Hades; it is not clear where the [thumos] goes.[259] The [menos], a third aspect of Homeric psychology, ceases to function at death, but it does not leave the body. This means that since the masculinity of the Amazons resides in their [thumos], it is precisely that essential element which makes the Amazons equivalent to men and worthy opponents which disappears at death. What is left is a female corpse. To fight with an Amazon is an act of heroism, a man-to-"man" combat, but once the Amazon is dead the honour of the victor is called into question, since the opponent is no longer a worthy antagonist but a dead woman. It was therefore necessary to avoid stressing the femininity of the Amazon in order to spare the male hero the risk of dishonour.

The visual record accurately reflects the most important values on which these ambivalences are based.[260] Acceptance of the

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[259] J.N. Bremmer, *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul*, Princeton 1983, pp. 74–76. "[. . .] it is not without importance to observe that when someone is killed, or the wish to kill is expressed, it is more often the [thymos] than the [psychè] which is mentioned as having left the body." p. 75. See too Caswell, *A Study of THUMOS*, esp. Ch. 4.

[260] For an interpretation of the representation of masculinity, the dead hero and the role of women in the archaeological record from mid-archaic

Amazon in the heroic world is visually expressed by the fact that the generic duel pattern is used for the Amazonomachy. In the case of Achilles and Penthesileia, the pattern is drastically altered to distinguish it from the generic version: Penthesileia does not occupy the same position towards Achilles as Hektor and Memnon, and thus, remarkably enough, stands on the "winning" side. Later on this position is corrected and the usual version is restored.

The Amazons are also adapted to heroic custom as regards attributes and equipment, although they are essentially different in a few respects. Male heroes, whether they are wearing a breast-plate or not, are usually naked, and their corpses are usually represented naked too. This nudity is functional in scenes of laying out the dead, for losers on the field of battle are often stripped of their clothing and arms. Heroic nudity may then take on a different meaning: stripped of the insignia of masculinity, it resembles the defenceless body of a woman. Hektor expresses the same idea when he expresses his feelings of inadequacy to fight a duel with Achilles:

> Or if again I set down my shield massive in the middle
> and my ponderous helm, and lean my spear up against the rampart
> and go out as I am to meet Achilles the blameless
> [. . .]
> I might go up to him, and he take no pity upon me
> nor respect my position, but kill me naked so, as if I were
> a woman, once I stripped my armour from me.
>
> (*Il.* XXII, 111–113, 123–5)[261]

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black-figure, see F. Lissarrague and A. Schnapp, "Imagerie des Grecs ou Grèce des imagiers?" in *Le Temps de la Réflexion*, II, 1981, pp. 275–297.

[261] The allusions to masculinity and femininity in this passage are complex. Hektor associates himself with a woman when he removes his armour and attempts to resolve the conflict with words instead of with a duel. However, he assumes that Achilles will not view him in that light: [aidoos] refers to respect for a person's position, in particular for the respectful distance to be observed *vis-à-vis* women and [parthenoi]. It is not assumed that Achilles will strike a woman down, but that he will simply [autoos] see Hektor as a man who is naked [gumnos] and thus defenceless. In lines 125–130 Hektor compares the imaginary, impossible dialogue with the whispering of a young man and a [parthenos] in love. There is nothing to be gained from Hektor's assuming the metaphorical role of a woman (I take [hoos te] here to be comparative and consecutive) since Achilles will not recognize this manoeuvre for what it is. When Hektor is dead, the Achaians find him much softer

All the same, the body of a hero is still recognizably masculine; the genitals are always carefully delineated on the vase-paintings. As a corpse, the male body is an object of nobility and worthy of being viewed. As for the Amazons, however, they are never naked before the classical period. Even when lying on the ground—dead or mortally wounded—they are still fully dressed in their armour and chiton. Their female body may not be shown. Nor are female contours like breasts visible under the clothing before the classical period.[262] In Attic black-figure work, female bodies are generally concealed under a long [peplos]. Sculpture of the same period did not display female nudity either, but it did reveal the contours of the female body. The later red-figure vase-painting, by contrast, displayed both the female contours underneath the clothing and female nudity. Female nudity is almost entirely absent from black-figure painting. The representations of the duel of Atalante might offer material for a comparison with the Amazons.[263] Her torso is portrayed nude on two occasions, and there is one instance of her naked breasts.[264] However, the duel of Atalante was a wrestling bout, not a heroic duel in epic hoplite armour. For purposes of comparison, then, the significant item is the nudity of the male hero, whether beneath a breast-plate or not, and there is no equivalent way of representing the Amazons. Thus with regard to their clothing as

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to touch [malakooteros amphaphaästhai] (XXII, 373), a phrase which Vermeule associates with the body of a woman, *Aspects of Death*, p. 103.

[262] Breasts would never be visible beneath a breast-plate. It is in principle possible in the case of the richly decorated short "dresses", which are slightly longer than a chiton, which the Amazons are often portrayed to be wearing. Geometric vases, on the other hand, do differentiate between the sexes, sometimes characterizing women by the presence of breasts; see G. Ahlberg, *Prothesis and Ekphora in Greek Geometric Art.*, Göteborg 1971, pp. 32ff., 72ff., 114ff.

[263] In Attic black-figure vase-painting, *LIMC* "Atalante" no. 63 wears a short citon with a naked torso, the skin is black, and no breasts are indicated; nos. 64, 66, 67, and 69 wear a short chiton-like dress which also covers the torso, no breasts are indicated, the skin is white; no. 71 is dressed in a short chiton, the breasts are clearly indicated on her naked torso, the skin is white. Compare Attic red-figure nos. 72, 85 and 86, where she is wearing the same short chiton, and the breasts are clearly indicated on the naked torso. Her male opponent is entirely naked on all of these representations; the compositional pattern remains virtually the same.

[264] For an analysis and interpretation of the motif of the naked woman with chiton, see M. Warner, *Monuments and Maidens. The Allegory of the Female Form*, London 1985, pp. 267–293, "The Slipped Chiton".

well, the Amazons occupy a position of their own, distinct from male heroes and women.[265]

We may assume that dead Amazons were treated differently from dead men, as can also be seen from the *Aithiopis*, where the corpse of Penthesileia is given to the Trojans, in striking contrast to the fate of most of the men who are killed, especially Hektor. The corpse of Penthesileia never appears as a visual motif, and the same is true of the female opponent of Herakles in his Amazonomachy. Mortally wounded Amazons are portrayed, but not dead ones.

Amazons are admitted to epic on the terms of the heroic narrative. As long as Penthesileia is alive, possesses a masculine [thumos] and proves her [aristeia], she is [antianeira] and a worthy opponent. In fighting as a hero against Penthesileia, Achilles obeys the rules of the heroic code as well. Then he gets the better of Penthesileia: the [aristos Achaioon] stabs her in a heroic duel, wounding her in the neck (a typical place for a woman to be wounded). Representations of the duel confirm the male entitlement to [andreia] and glory which is Achilles' due. Penthesileia dies. Her [thumos] leaves her body, and all that is left on the field of battle is a female corpse. Did Achilles remove her armour? It is unlikely, in view of the considerations advanced so far, that the epic context would tolerate such an action, for such an unnecessary display of the female nature of his opponent would devalue his heroic feat in an unacceptable manner. The epic norms do not allow the paradox of the Amazonomachy to be made explicit.

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[265] F. Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier. Archers, peltastes, cavaliers dans l'imagerie attique*, Paris,/ Rome 1990 arrives at the same conclusions concerning the position of Amazons in the representations of hoplites in Attic black-figure vase paintings. Though Amazons are hoplites, they are female, and in this respect "anti-hoplites" (pp. 28–29). As hoplites, Amazons are never nude, in contrast with male Greek ones; in particular, male nudity is emphasized in the "beautiful death" where the heroic aspect is expressed either by this nudity or by the Boiotian shield (pp. 78–79). Within the male world of the Greek hoplites, femininity is represented either by women, or, by analogy, by the "Skythian" archers—not by the Amazons as hoplites; p. 92 and passim. Thus the Amazon hoplite army is an "espace de la confusion" (p. 33); in their northern outfit, the Amazons display a mixture of barbarian archers and hoplite warriors, feminine and masculine—a representation uniquely qualifying "le monde inquiétant des Amazones" (p. 132).

That is precisely what Thersites does, in accordance with his role in the epic. He claims that Achilles felt [eroos] for Penthesileia and thus entertained feelings for the Amazon *as a woman.* In doing so, he reveals what Achilles must disguise at all costs, viz. the fact that the Amazon was also potentially a woman when she fought with Achilles. The balance is tipped once she is dead and the masculine element, her [thumos], has left her. It is now that Thersites speaks his words of abuse. However, the effect of his words has retrospective repercussions for the duel itself, for he insinuates that Achilles has been fighting a woman and has killed a woman all along, and that he knew it all the time. No greater aspersions can be cast on a hero's behaviour.

It is now obvious that whether Thersites was right or not is irrelevant. What counts is the ambiguity of the Amazon warrior and the need for Achilles to disavow one aspect—her femininity—during the combat. Equally important is the intolerable nature of Thersites' words, which bring to light and undermine this disavowal; in confronting Achilles with the paradox of the Amazon when the fighting is over, he fundamentally tarnishes Achilles' [kleos]. It is important to remove the dead Amazon from sight for the same reason. She may be celebrated in epic or in a memorial, but catching a glimpse of her as a dead woman must be avoided. As we have seen, in the later interpretations the words of the conflict between Thersites are transformed into actions,[266] but in the world of epic there is no need for these enormities: the accusation that Achilles recognized Penthesileia as a woman was the worst insult that could be uttered.

The later interpretations also contain the idea that [eroos] weakens the person affected and makes him or her a victim of the loved one. This idea is barely present in epic,[267] and only gains ground in the classical period.[268] These later developments show not only that the core of the epic representation was no longer fully comprehensible or plausible, but also that the image of the Amazons had changed radically. The femininity of the Amazons was no longer a datum which had to be treated with circumspection. In general, their physicality attracted more attention, as can be seen from the attempts to solve the problem of their perpetuation. The question was no longer that of how a man should approach an Amazon in combat, i.e. a woman playing a man's role, but that of how a man should approach an Amazon as a woman, even though she was a warrior. This shift is well documented in the visual record.[269] The attractive, extremely feminine, full-breasted Amazons who graced the temple of Artemis in Ephesos are far removed from the heroic, masculine women warriors of the early Amazonomachies. Achilles and Penthesileia turn into a duo that embodies the eternity of love. In the late-classical and post-classical world, the relationship between the hero and the Amazon, which could only produce extreme dissonance in the epic world, was to become an expression of hope and harmony.

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[266] Cf. Schol. ad Lyk. *Al.* 997–1001. "Dictys" 4, 1 takes this process even further: although Achilles presses for a suitable burial, the Greeks threaten to throw the half-dead Penthesileia into the Skamandros or to the dogs; in the end she is thrown into the river, though not by Thersites himself but by Diomedes. See also "Penthesileia" in *RE* Suppl. VII, 1940, pp. 868–875 (F. Schwenn).

[267] Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire*, esp. pp. 61 and 83.

[268] See e.g. G.W. Most, "Self-disclosure and Self-sufficiency in Greek Culture", *JHS* 109, 1989, pp. 114–133.

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[269] Various stages in this process—the role of Artemis, the eroticization of the Amazons—are discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRIAMOS AND BELLEROPHONTES

The historical interpretation

The Amazons occur twice in the *Iliad* as the opponents of male protagonists. The text refers to the Amazonamachies of Priamos (III, 189) and Bellerophontes (VI, 186) as events of the past. If we follow the scholiast's interpretation and regard the battle between the Phrygians and the Amazons as an event of Priamos' youth, the seniority of the Trojan ruler implies that it should be placed almost two generations before the time of the narrative. The same certainly applies to the heroic exploits of Glaukos' grandfather Bellerophontes. As a result of this convergence, the activities of the Amazons seem to be set in a specific period at a particular remove from the present, and the events seem to be compatible with a historical chronology. Moreover, both passages also indicate the site of these confrontations: Priamos fought near the Sangarios, Bellerophontes in (the border country of) Lykia.

It therefore comes as no surprise that these two episodes were fated to play a major role in the many attempts to connect the Homeric epics with the history of Asia Minor and the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. In particular, these passages form an essential argument in the so-called Hittite thesis (discussed in Chapter I): the source of the Sangarios is relatively close to the centre of the Hittite Empire. The vague background of the battle of the Phrygians against the Amazons, as well as the unexplained presence of the Amazons on the periphery of Lykia, recall the migrations which continually provoked disturbances and conflicts from the last centuries of the second millennium to the seventh century. Furthermore, an important role is also played in the historical reconstruction by the "letter" which king Proitos gave Bellerophontes for the king of Lykia. This evidence for literacy in the otherwise illiterate context of the epic looks like the trace left by a society which was (still) familiar with the use of writing.

The 1950s and 1960s were the main period in which the excessive speculations of the Hittite theses were evaluated and incorporated in a few authoritative monographs. Two examples of this historicising approach may be cited by way of illustration:

> To the Bronze Age survivals in the material culture of the epics we may add two of a different nature in examples of geographical knowledge, which can hardly have been acquired at a later date. [The first . . .]. The second is the account of the battle on the Sangarios against the Amazons in which Priamos as a young man had taken part. The battle is best explained as one element of the upheaval in which the Hittite Empire perished towards the close of the Bronze Age. The mere knowledge of the name of the river, which occurs again in XVI, 719, has no significance; it would no doubt become known to the Ionian immigrants soon after their arrival. As we have seen, Gordion had trade relations with the Ionian coast before the end of the eighth century; but the story of a martial adventure by Trojans in that region would hardly originate with the Ionians, nor is it likely that they picked up any local tradition of so remote a past. It is just such intelligence as might be brought back to Greece by those Mycenaean settlers who towards the end of the Bronze Age abandoned their Anatolian seats and probably in many cases found their way back to the motherland.[1]
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> Mycenaean contact with the Hittites is proved by finds in Boghazkoy, and Homer seems to have preserved some memories of the Hittites in this period, the 14th and 13th centuries. The story of Bellerophon is the most interesting. His warlike excursions from Lycia seem to have some connection with the troubles in Lycia about which the king of the Hittites wrote to the king of Ahhiyawa, and the Chimaira may perhaps be a 14th century Hittite monster. Memories also [. . .] in Priamos campaign against the Amazons on the river Sangarios.[2]

There are no absolute dates for the destruction of Troy VI by an earthquake nor that of Troy VIIa by fire (these are the strata of the hill in Hissarlik which are usually associated with the Iliadic Troy). In accepting a direct connection between epic and archaeology and a date for the fall of Troy around 1200

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[1] H.L. Lorimer, *Homer and the Monuments*, London 1950, p. 454.

[2] T.B.L. Webster, *From Mycenae to Homer*, 1964^2, p. 67. On the Oriental character of Bellerophontes's letter, borrowed by the Mykenaians, pp. 73ff.

B.C., we give the historical argument the benefit of the doubt for a moment. Both the connection between the epic and Hissarlik and the date for the arrival of the Phrygians are historically placed in the period of decline of the Hittite empire around 1200. The earliest invasion of Asia Minor by the Phrygians from Thrake cannot be dated securely; it is generally assumed that their arrival is a part of the migrations which took place in the last two centuries before ca. 1000. Troy VIIb2 (late twelfth century) was inhabited for a short time by Balkan peoples; perhaps they included Phrygians.[3] After a pause in the archaeological material, the Phrygians can be clearly located in central Asia Minor around 800, where they form a prosperous and culturally flourishing ethnos with Gordion on the Sangarios as its centre.

Lorimer regards the sequence of events in the epic narrative as a reflection of these historical developments, but her version of this process is hardly chronologically convincing. Priamos' account during the Teichoscopy presupposes a settled Phrygian society which Priamos of Troy summons as an ally to fight at the Sangarios against the hostile Amazon forces. This is supposed to have taken place some time before the siege of Troy—a loose interpretation of "two generations" is not objectionable in itself—but the result is indefensible. Since the Phrygian empire on the Sangarios dates at any rate from after the fall of Troy and of the Hittite empire, it cannot have preceded this shift of spheres of influence. And are we to conclude from Lorimer's arguments that the Amazons, the enemies of the Phrygians, were Hittites after all?

To turn to Webster's argument, he is apparently referring to the so-called Tawagalawas letter (ca. 1300), in which the Hittite king issued an urgent but fruitless appeal to the king of Ahhiyawa to extradite a certain Piyamaradus, who was operating from Millawanda—which belonged to Ahhiyawa in some way or other—to carry out raids on Lukka, a Hittite region which probably corresponds to Lykia. Earlier in the letter mention is made of Tawagalawas, a relative of the king of Ahhiyawa, from whom the letter takes its name, who had settled in Lukka and was eager to become a vassal of the Hittite king.

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[3] For the Phrygians as a people of Thrakian origin, see above, p. 266.

At first sight this text seems to fit in nicely with the passage from the *Iliad*, though it is extremely remarkable that one of the extant clay tablets should contain the exact historical counterpart to the Bellerophontes story. On this reading, Piyamaradus is Bellerophontes, the king of Ahhiyawa is Proitos, and Tawagalawas is the king of Lykia.[4] Closer inspection, however, reveals that the content of the Tawagalawas letter does not really match the story of Bellerophontes. As Proitos and the king of Lykia are out to get Bellerophontes killed, it would be the simplest solution in the light of the Hittite text if he were to be extradited to the Hittite king. Instead, however, the hero accomplishes his feats and marries the daughter of the ruler of Lykia; in the end he meets a solitary end, while we hear nothing more of his powerful foe.

Of course, there is a difference between a historical document and a mythical narrative, but Lorimer and Webster propose to regard this difference as minimal. The historical interpretation treats the epic narrative as a pseudo-historical account. It is therefore all the more surprising that the main enemy in these episodes, the might of the Hittites, is disguised behind the unfamiliar, female Amazons. If Webster is right in supposing that the details of the Tawagalawas letter match those of the story of Bellerophontes, why has the most important element disappeared?

At its best, this historicising interpretation is vague; when subjected to closer scrutiny, reconstructions of this kind prove not to be in agreement with the epic narratives at all. Their failure to convince is an indication of a change in attitudes. A consensus has recently emerged in Homeric research that the epic world cannot be related to a historical society just like that.[5] Epic is first and foremost a specific narrative genre, characterised by a complicated stratification. Each of the elements of this layered structure has its own function in the composition of the epic. While these factors may be regarded more or less as technical elements, the final narrative is presented by or in the form of internal narrative instances, such as characters who do or say something, commentaries, perspectives or objectives. These factors are labelled in different ways, depending on the theoretical stance of the researcher. Whatever terminology is used, it is intended to refer to the ways in which the course of the narrative is given direction. Since it is not the aim of the present work to present an extensive narratological analysis,[6] I shall resort to the simple but direct term "the narrator". Thanks to the length of the extant text of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, these poems enable us to provide a description of this narrator; this is not the case for the *Aithiopis*. There is no *a priori* reason to identify this narrator with the poet(s); this can only be assumed if there are additional, cogent reasons for assuming it to be the case.

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[4] The identification of Ahhiyawa with the Achaians is a highly controversial question; for the main arguments see J.T. Hooker, *Mycenaean Greece*, London 1977, pp. 121–131.

[5] Van Wees, *Status Warriors*, tries to reconstruct Homeric society without locating it in a specific period. The value of his work lies in the coherence which he has assigned to the Homeric material from a comparative perspec-

The search for historical reminiscences must take these narratological factors into account at all stages. The famous historical anomalies[7] well illustrate how epic isolates historical data from their original context and adapts them to its own structures. That is why the episodes of Priamos and Bellerophontes cannot be directly related to historical events; they must be analysed in the first place as narratives.

Priamos

Our analysis of the epic so far has shown that the Amazons have acquired an unmistakable function within the narrative. As opponents, they focus attention on the limits of male heroism, simultaneously producing an effect of confirmation and subversion. In the *Aithiopis* these possibilities of the Amazon motif were concentrated in the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia. Penthesileia is not the only opponent of Achilles, it is true, but she is the opponent who adds an irreplaceable dimension of her

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spective. However, although he emphasises the importance of fantasy and story-telling at the beginning of his book, *Status Warriors* ch. 1, in practice his analysis does not pay much attention to these elements.

[6] As in I.J.F. de Jong, *Narrators and Focalizers. The Presentation of the Story in the Iliad*, diss. Amsterdam, 1987.

[7] For example, the burial or cremation of the dead; the predominant use of bronze as against the occasional use of iron; riding in chariots whose function is no longer clear; for a concise discussion see e.g. Trypanis, *The Homeric epics*, and Kirk, *Songs*, p.179– 210.

own to the drift of his story and thereby to the heroism of the epic as such.

Is that also true of Priamos' account of his youthful escapade?[8] His words have a clear function and purport. In Priamos' dialogue with Helene, the narrator is describing the size and composition of the Achaian army. Priamos expresses his admiration for the power of Agamemnon, which he deduces from the number of units under his command. The magnitude of Agamemnon's force reminds him of the army of the Phrygians, but even that band of warriors was smaller than the Achaian contingent.

The text oscillates between different points of comparison. We might expect the size of the Achaian army to remind Priamos of the size of the Amazon force. In that case he could have expressed his surprise at the size of the enemy, the force of numbers eliciting both admiration and fear. That would have provided a neat comparison, but that it clearly not what happens. The masculine termination in the last line (III, 190: all' oude **hoi tosoi** èsan, **hosoi** helikoopes Achaioi) unambiguously excludes any comparison between the Achaians and the female Amazons. In the main point of the passage, the Amazons have no function at all; they simply serve to divert attention for a moment.

This comparison of the two armies includes a few other statements: a description of the Phrygians, their country, prosperity and reputation; the fact that Priamos was once actively involved in the fray, though at a considerably younger age; and the identity of the enemy against which the Phrygians had assembled all their units and allies: the Amazons. These statements, especially lines 188–189, briefly introduce a second theme: Priamos once took part in an Amazonomachy. The Achaians will do the same in the narrative present—in fact in the immediate future. For we may assume that the audience was acquainted with the fact that the Amazons joined in the struggle as allies of the Trojans after the death of Hektor.[9]

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[8] For the text see pp. 146, 161–162.

[9] Not a single critic doubts that the main features of the entire Trojan epic were familiar and that in the course of a recitation of a part of it, the full context was implicitly assumed. The *Odyssey* in particular contains many passages which refer to material which is not dealt with in the *Iliad* nor

A remarkable effect is thus produced at the level of the narrative. As far as narrative time is concerned, the words of the present focus both on the past and on the future, suggesting that the past is in fact a prefiguration of the future. If the course of the narrative is indeed fixed for the audience, the reference to the Amazons of the past looks forward to the series of events in which they will reappear and which ends with the death of Achilles. Intimations of this kind are common in the *Iliad*, especially with reference to the fate of Achilles. Moreover, the wording of these explicit references to Achilles' lot is unusual and not strictly formular. This decision to focus on the pattern of Achilles and his destiny is an indication that we are probably dealing with the poet of the *Iliad* himself.[10] Secondly, a shift of perspective takes place. The audience, who are accustomed to set the Amazons on the side of the Trojans, are unexpectedly forced to imagine them briefly as opponents of the Trojan Priamos. Through this interplay of oppositions and analogies, the Trojans, as represented by Priamos, now assume the position of the Achaians.

The ancient reception demonstrates that this shift of perspective came as a surprise to the audience and that it is not in harmony with the rest of the narrative. The question as to why Penthesileia joined in the struggle was discussed in texts of different kinds. This question was all the more pressing because the logical coherence of the narrative was threatened by these contradictory elements. Let us examine a few examples of the reactions of these readers.

Strabon's approach is a relatively businesslike one. He asks himself about the relations between the various peoples in the northern part of Asia Minor as regards geography, customs and the resultant social relations.[11] He begins by stating that the Amazons did not want to fight on Priamos' side because he had

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elsewhere in the *Odyssey*, but is taken to belong to the written epic cycle. Comparative material—cf. Vansina, *Oral Tradition*—indicates that certain (groups of) singers may concentrate on one part of the material, or develop a personal approach to the traditional material. This in no way contradicts the assumption that the audience was familiar with the full narrative.

[10] Renehan, "The *Heldentod*", p. 100 and passim.

[11] XII, 3, 24. Strabon's account forms part of his criticism of Apollodoros' reading of the Catalogue of Trojan Allies.

previously fought against them, (incorrectly) citing the Homeric lines to prove his point.[12] He proceeds, however, to note that the other peoples lived so close to Troy that they were prepared to respond to the Trojan call for help as allies, and the Amazons followed suit. He adds that there was nothing to prevent the Amazons from acting as allies of the Trojans since there was no mutual feeling of hatred [echthra]. At this precise point Strabon indicates by the words "I think" [oimai] that he is adding a motive himself, viz. the absence of any evidence to the contrary, in order to resolve the inconsistencies of the Homeric version. "Dictys" says that it is not clear whether Penthesileia came for money or simply because she loved battle; her people was always harassing the neighbours.[13] The motive of money makes another appearance later: when Penthesileia heard of the death of Hektor, she was dismayed and wanted to return, but Alexandros (Paris) gave her a large amount of gold and silver to get her to stay.[14] In "Dictys" both Paris and Penthesileia are far removed from the epic heroic ideal.[15]

The clearest literary tradition, which is also to be found in illustrations, has introduced the motif of the accidental killing of her sister by Penthesileia and her desire to be purified by Priamos.[16]

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[12] See above, p. 198.

[13] Dictys Cretensis, III, 15. See too R.M. Frazer, jr. (ed.) *The Trojan War. The Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian.* Bloomington/London 1966. Frazer states in his commentary that "Dictys and Dares frequently contradict Homer in spite of the fact that he was obviously the ultimate source of much of what they report." pp. 5ff.

[14] Dictys, IV, 2.

[15] The most that can be said of Paris is that he does display a degree of consistency of character in the tradition. He is not noted for courage or fighting ability in the *Iliad* either, but tends to pass the consequences of his relationship with Helene on to others. In the account by "Dictys", Paris does not feel the urge to defend his own interests after the death of Hektor, but he wants the Amazon to do his fighting for him and approaches her as the leader of a group of mercenaries. Besides the unusual version in "Dictys", it is evident that there were various versions of these events; Sisyphos of Kos, *FGrHist* 50 F 1, recounts a different version of Hektor's fatal combat with Achilles to that in the *Iliad*; the arrival of Penthesileia is an important ingredient in the story, because Achilles overwhelmed Hektor when the latter went to meet the Amazon queen.

[16] Apollod. *Epit.* 5,1; Q.Sm. *Posthom.* I, 24ff. For the later illustrations of this scene as a source for the original story, see Kopff, "The Structure of the *Amazonia*". On purification after killing and exile see R.C.T Parker, *Miasma*, Oxford 1983, pp. 375–392.

This relatively late attested tradition has the advantage of introducing the motif of killing and purification twice into the Penthesileia story, for it recurs in the narrative in the killing of Thersites, which was part of the material of the *Aithiopis.*[17] This symmetrical use of themes links the later literary adaptations to the older epic elements. The problem with the killing story, however, is that it does not explain anything: why does Penthesileia turn to a former enemy of her people for purification? It is customary for offenders to resort to an outsider for purification after a killing, because they are alienated from their own surroundings and are therefore bound to leave them,[18] but the purifier must also have the confidence of the guilty party if he is to perform this duty.[19]

There are two ways of dealing with this problem, though neither one excludes the other. First, the motif of purification is not sufficient to entirely dispense with the lacuna, or rather friction, between the theme of Priamos' combat against the Amazons and Penthesileia's coming to Troy. Even though this motif has a large degree of intrinsic importance and therefore seems to possess the capacity to bring about a synthesis, and even though unintentional homicide followed by exile belong to the stock ingredients of mythic narratives to motivate the presence of individuals in a new setting,[20] the rift is not really healed. The

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[17] Parker, *Miasma*, p. 131 n.102 does not believe that the killing of Thersites by Achilles is a later addition. On the ambiguous role of the gods in Greek initiatory rites, see the concise discussion by J. Redfield, "From Sex to Politics: The Rites of Artemis Triklaris and Dionysos Aisymnetes at Patras", in Halperin, *Before Sexuality*, pp. 115–134, esp. p. 123.

[18] Parker, *Miasma*, pp. 370–374.

[19] There is an illustrative story in this connection in Herodotos (I, 34ff.). Adrastos, a Phrygian of royal blood, appealed to Kroisos of Lydia after accidentally killing his own brother. Herodotos adds that the relevant Lydian rituals correspond closely to those of the Greeks. Kroisos does what is asked of him, but he still does not know the identity of the stranger. When it is revealed, Kroisos says that Adrastos' family and his own family are friends and that he will adopt the Phrygian into his household. The story has a tragic end, because Adrastos accidentally kills someone else—this time the son of Kroisos, Atys. From Herodotos' account it seems that Adrastos did not choose Kroisos at random, but that recognised friendship is nonetheless not a precondition for the ritual of purification: Kroisos feels obliged to comply with the stranger's request without any further explanation. Cf. Parker, *Miasma*, pp. 370ff.

[20] The presence of Bellerophontes in the palace of Proitos was also motivated in this way in a later version; Apollod. II.iii.1., cf. Parker, *Miasma*, p. 379.

Amazons and Priamos were one another's foes within recent memory, not as participants in an occasional skirmish, but as opponents in a large-scale conflict. Second, it is possible that the theme of the former hostilities between Trojans and Amazons has been repressed by the desire to provide an interesting motivation for the arrival of Penthesileia. All attention is concentrated on the geographical and figurative proximity of the Amazons to the Trojans, above all to the figure of Priamos, for if it is not a friend who is sought out, it is at any rate a wise man who dares to assume the responsibility for purification after a killing. In this way Priamos' purificatory role harmonises well with his epic *persona* as an *éminence grise*, king of Troy and wise patriarch.

This is precisely how Priamos is portrayed at the beginning of the Teichoscopy:

> Now those who sat with Priamos: Panthoös and Thymoites, Lampos and Klytios, Hiketaon, scion of Ares, with Antenor and Oukalegon, both men of good counsel: these were seated by the Skaian gates, elders of the people. Now through old age these fought no longer, yet were they excellent speakers still, and clear, as cicadas who through the forest settle on trees, to issue their delicate voice of singing.
>
> (*Il.* III, 146–154)[21]

The focus now shifts from the contradictions at the level of the narrative of Troy as a whole to the figure of Priamos. The narrator of the *Iliad* emphasises that the old men who are sitting with the king can no longer join in the combat. Priamos is singled out for his age: he is referred to as "old man" every

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Parker notes as a general rule that "killing is constantly used as a purely structural device in myths whose main concern is genealogical.", p. 376. This "genealogical concern" does not apply to Penthesileia, but it does play an important role in Bellerophontes's narratives (see below, pp. 308, 325ff.).

[21] The text is somewhat confusing because Priamos, Panthoös, Thymoites, Lampos, Klytios and Hiketaon are all mentioned in the accusative case in lines 146–148, thereby forming a single group, while only Antenor and Oukalegon are in the nominative and form the actual subject of [hoi d'amphi]. Line 147 is a fixed formulary list of the sons of Laomedon, brothers of Priamos (cf. XX, 238). Hiketaon's epithet "scion of Ares" is a good example of a generic epithet, which is here in flagrant contradiction to the context. As far as we know, the others are not direct relatives of Priamos. We may therefore conclude that the passage refers to a group of associates of the king who share a more or less equal status.

time he speaks or is spoken to.[22] The old man never refers to his youthful exploits in the front ranks except for the passage under discussion. By comparison with the "old man" of the Achaians, Nestor, there is a striking difference in characterisation. Nestor constantly regales his audiences with tales of the good old days and his youthful exploits. Nestor regularly displays sound advice and a capacity to fight in the narrative present. Although he now has two generations behind him (*Il.* I, 250–252), he still possesses these qualities. In fact, he is even older than Priamos, for the latter's grandson Astyanax is still a toddler. The flashback to Priamos' activities as a warrior is at odds with the portrayal of the Trojan king in the *Iliad* as a whole. The passage in the Teichoscopy is unique; it is nowhere prepared in the text, nor does it recur in the narrative. Priamos' function as a warrior is out of keeping with the prototypical roles of "old man" and aging patriarch.[23]

The impression of a lack of consistency is reinforced by the choice of the Amazons as Priamos' opponents. Unlike the preceding remarks, this cannot be deduced from the text of the *Iliad* itself, but from familiarity with the Amazonomachy. In the early archaic period the opponents of the Amazons were confined to the most prominent heroes: Achilles and Herakles, as well as Bellerophontes as he is portrayed in the *Iliad.* Theseus' Amazonomachy from the classical period fits into this pattern. The Amazonomachy forms part of a series of demanding tests which enabled these heroes to prove their heroic qualities. None of the heroes in question attained ripe old age to function as wise patriarchs.

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[22] In this passage III, 186, 249, 259: [geroon]; 191, 225: [geraios], etc. These are not identical formulae.

[23] The differences between the Trojan aristocracy of old men and the Achaian [basileis] have been interpreted by S. Deger-Valkotzy, "Homer und der Orient", *WJA* N.F. V, 1979, pp. 25–31, as signs of different historical societies: Priamos with his many wives and children, an opulent and non-combatant figure, is taken to be an example of an oriental monarch with his harem, probably modelled on the Phoenician courts. Besides these historical arguments, the author stresses that it was the poet's primary aim to evoke an opposition between the Achaians and the Trojans. The Trojan command is not embodied in a single figure who both fights and gives counsel, as is the case with the Achaians, but there is a division of labour between Priamos (policy) and Hektor (fighting).

We have seen that at the level of the narrative and with regard to the characterisation of Priamos, linked to the specific meaning of the Amazonomachy, the battle between the Trojan king and the Amazons is inconsistent and may even result in friction within the structure of the narrative. It is therefore conceivable that the Amazonomachy was not a traditional feat of (the young) Priamos. Bearing in mind the hypotheses developed in earlier chapters, the use of the extremely ancient formula "the Amazons equivalent to men" in line III, 189, which begins with an opening formula "on the day that..." and ends with the formula [Amazones antianeirai], suggests the presence of a relatively later addition to the narrative.[24]

In that case, it is worth inquiring what may have led the poet to make such an addition. In suggesting some tentative responses to this question, it can be broken down into two components: the context of "armed combat with a large-scale force"; and the specific casting of the Amazons in the role of opponents. To begin with the context—the account of the Phrygians, their rulers and empire and the battle of Sangarios—the narrator could naturally have chosen a different comparison to describe the Achaian force. The elements of Priamos' account—the good relations between Aiolis and Phrygia, the flourishing of Gordion followed by the arrival of an enemy army which is superior to the Phrygians—may be seen to correspond to the situation between ca. 700 and 650 B.C. The invasion of the Kimmerians, the first mounted nomads to invade Asia Minor, led to the fall of the Phrygian empire in the first half of the seventh century. This does not mean that the passage in the Teichoscopy is an epic account of these events, nor that a certain Otreus and Mygdon resisted the Kimmerians, and certainly not that the Amazons are "actually" the Kimmerians.[25] All the same, the poet of the *Iliad* may have been inspired by recent conflicts in this area in his search for the elements of his comparison. There was certainly no need for him to be informed in detail about the events, nor would he have reported them in this fashion; the *res gestae* would always have had to conform to the structure and narrative technique of the epic. Such a procedure is more in line with an oral performance, in which the fixed elements of the narrative are given, leaving the performer to react—deliberately or unconsciously—to the preoccupations of his audience. The passage in its present form displays an "additional" character in this respect, because the comparison appeals to historical material which belongs to a relatively late stage in the tradition.

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[24] The term "interpolation" is deliberately avoided here because it usually refers to additions to a written text; it is doubtful whether such a term would be appropriate in the present context. Besides, 'interpolation' has connotations of something that is out of place, of which the text should be purified. That is by no means the case here. Taking the *Iliad* to be an essentially oral creation, there is no ground for treating additions as improprieties. On the contrary, the use of the ancient Amazon motif at this point reveals how the motif functioned in epic. If it is right to suppose that the addition of the Amazons in III, 189 belongs to one of the later versions of the extant *Iliad*, the question arises of whether we are in fact dealing with the last, written version, and whether this written version should be placed in the context of the Peisistratid redaction. The latter point is not certain; as far as the former is concerned, it is not possible to pass judgement on the basis of the passages under discussion alone. Suffice it to say that the associative relation between [antitheoio] and [antianeirai] (see Chapter II) may refer to an oral "flow of speech"; in that case, the poet is at any rate not the same as the writer (however one is to conceive that relation). See below for the structuring of the Bellerophontes passage.

To turn to the choice of the Amazons as opponents, the passage under discussion would become clearer if line 189 were missing, resulting in a direct comparison between Achaians and Phrygians. Nevertheless, this would not remove the incoherence of the comparison, in which friend and foe are juxtaposed. However, logic is not an epic priority, and nor are concision or historical accuracy. The addition of the Amazons as the opponents of the Phrygians and therefore of Priamos can be interpreted as evincing a natural interest in and even preference for the Amazons themselves. In other words, the notion of a "hostile [ethnos]" could have suggested the Amazons, and the representation of the Amazons would have displayed a certain analogy with that of other, related [ethnè]. The parallel between the Amazons and the Thrakians has already been discussed—but the Thrakians (possibly including the Phrygians) were already allies of the Trojans. In short, just as the poet may have been reacting to events in Phrygia, his choice of an opponent may have been influenced by the cultural climate in which he found himself. The development of the Penthesileia motif from the vaguer Amazon background and the growing importance of Herakles' Amazonomachy (discussed below) are indicative of the great importance attached to the Amazon motif and of the urge to make use of and to interpret this motif, particularly in an ethnographic context. This process is unmistakably present in the visual material from ca. 700 B.C.

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[25] The latter claim has been made by Rohde, "Studien zur Chronologie der Griechischen Literaturgeschichte" and Ghirshman "Les Cimmériens et leurs Amazones". Cf. above, p. 86.

To conclude, despite the claims to the contrary in both ancient and modern literature, Priamos' Amazonomachy proves to be marked by innovation. The growing importance of the Amazons in the course of the archaic period assumed such proportions that the motif was incorporated in existing narratives, even when this involved inconsistency. Priamos' fight against the Amazons at the Sangarios is an example of such an application, which jars with the surrounding text. The use of the Amazon formula may have been influenced by the preceding epithet [antitheoio]; at any rate, it is thanks to this echo principle that the older formula has been retained at this point.

The awkwardness of the passage under consideration in relation to the rest of the Trojan story, the alliance between the Trojans and the Amazons, and the unsuitability of the role of Priamos as an opponent of the Amazons, raises a number of interesting questions. As pointed out in Chapter III, the story of Achilles and Penthesileia probably belonged to a different current of hexameter poetry on the siege of Troy than the one which resulted in the *Iliad.* It was also demonstrated that the Penthesileia story is firmly embedded in this poetry. In the light of these considerations, various possibilities present themselves if we also assume that line III, 189 is a late addition to the *Iliad.* If the line is omitted, those contradictions disappear which bear on the Trojan legend *as a whole*, at the level of the narrative: the Amazons are allies of the Trojans, and the Penthesileia episode can be accommodated to the other narratives without any difficulty. This would also solve the problems involved in the characterisation of Priamos himself. On the other hand, if the line is retained—and there is no getting around it, since commentators from the classical period on react to the text of the *Iliad* which does include this line—the hypothesis of (at least) two different tendencies becomes more attractive. The poet of the present

Teichoscopy, possibly motivated by the considerations outlined above, incorporated the fascinating Amazonomachy in his account of Priamos as well; the Penthesileia episode probably did not belong to his regular repertoire.[26]

This all adds up to a peak of hexameter poetry between the ninth and the seventh centuries with the Trojan war as *Leitmotiv*, an epic tradition which was practised and supported by various currents (scholars like West and Schwartz refer to "schools"). The Amazon motif may be supposed to have acquired form within these currents in a variety of ways. The more ancient, less elaborate Amazon motif developed into the story of Penthesileia, and it was incorporated in the material of the *Iliad*, to which it did not traditionally belong.

This is no more than a hypothesis, though the frictions in the *Iliad* passage are by no means hypothetical. However, there is another, much longer passage in the *Iliad* featuring the Amazons, with the hero Bellerophontes in the leading role. It is to this passage that we now turn.

The Deeds of Bellerophontes

Unlike Priamos, Bellerophontes is undoubtedly a heroic figure. His life, as recounted by Glaukos in Book VI of the *Iliad*, displays many of the expected features of a hero, especially his ability to cheat death in the accomplishment of well-nigh impossible feats. All the same, Bellerophontes is a complicated figure, and opinions on the nature of his heroism and on the origin and function of his *persona* are much more divided than in the case of Herakles or Achilles.

The starting-point for discussion is the passage in *Iliad* VI, 152–211, the most comprehensive account of his myth in the archaic and classical period. It runs as follows.

Sisyphos, the son of Aiolos, lived in the Argive city of Ephyre. Sisyphos had a son called Glaukos, who became the father of Bellerophontes. Anteia, the wife of the king of Argos, Proitos, fell in love with the young man, and when he rejected her advances, she claimed that the young hero had tried to ravish her. Proitos stopped short of putting Bellerophontes to death, as Anteia proposed. Instead, he sent him away to his father-in-law in Lykia. He gave Bellerophontes a written message for the Lykian king which contained the instructions to kill the bearer of the message. After entertaining Bellerophontes for nine days, the Lykian king examined him on the tenth day and asked for the written message. Then the king sent him to kill the Chimaira, followed by the Solymoi and then the Amazons. When Bellerophontes kept coming back from these exploits alive, the king laid an ambush for him with the best men in all Lykia. Bellerophontes killed them too. The king was now forced to recognise that Bellerophontes was a true son of the gods. He pressed him to stay in Lykia and offered him his daughter's hand in marriage and half of the kingdom. The hero received a good piece of land and a vineyard. His wife bore him three children: Laodameia, who gave birth to Sarpedon after sleeping with Zeus; Isandros, and Hippolochos. Bellerophontes himself later incurred the enmity of all the gods and roamed through the Aleian plain, eating his heart [thumos] out and avoiding all contact with mortals. Isandros had been killed by Ares in the course of a battle with the Solymoi, and his daughter Laodameia had been killed by Artemis. The last of his children, Hippolochos, was the father of Glaukos, who prides himself on the reputation of his ancestors in Ephyre and Lykia.

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[26] This would account for the ancient tradition that the *Aithiopis* was composed by Arktinos and not by the poet of the *Iliad*. Incidentally, if we assume that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the work of a single poet, it is evident that a poet could not avoid anomalies within his own repertoire either.

The main element in the discussion of Bellerophontes is the question as to whether he is a Greek hero who has been introduced to the setting in Asia Minor, or whether he has made his way into Greek traditions from an oriental background.[27] In Greece Bellerophontes was pre-eminently the hero who could ride the winged horse Pegasos;[28] this element is not present in the *Iliad*. The question of his origin crops up in all kinds of discussions. First, the meaning of his name is not clear: is it Greek for "Killer of Belleros",[29] or is it derived from the Semitic Bel?[30] The location of Ephyre is equally unclear, though it must have been in Greece: was it in Thessaly,[31] near Korinth, or near Tiryns?[32]

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[27] From East to West: L. Malten,"Bellerophontes", *JDAI* 40, 1925, pp. 121–160; M. Astour, *Hellenosemitica. An Ethnic and Cultural study in West-semitic Impact on Mycenaean Greece*, Leiden 1967, Ch. III. From West to East: G. Kirk, *The Nature of Greek Myths*, pp. 150–151; F. Prinz, *Gründungsmythen und Sagenchronologie*, Munich 1979, pp. 99–104; R. Drews, "Argos and Argives in the *Iliad*", *CPh* 74, 1979, pp. 111–135, esp. p.122. Non-committal: S. Hiller, *Bellerophon. Ein griechischer Heros in der römische Kunst*, Munich, 1970, p. 92; M.P. Nilsson, *Homer and Mycenae*, London 1933, pp. 261–263. Uninterested: K. Kerényi, *The Heroes of the Greeks*, London 1959, pp. 80–81. J.A. White, "Bellerophon in the land of Nod", *AJPh* 103, 1982, pp. 119–127 has nothing to add to

The dating of the Homeric story of Bellerophontes is equally controversial, which lands us right in the middle of the debate on the influence of the Near East and Greece on one another. The initial emphasis on the Mykenaian period was succeeded by a stress on the Orientalising period of the eighth and seventh centuries.[33] Nowadays there is a tendency to regard the cultural

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Astour, who is absent from his bibliography. I have not been able to consult R. Peppermüller, *Die Bellerophontessage, ihre Herkunft und Geschichte*, diss. Tübingen 1961, an unpublished dissertation cited by Hiller, De Jong and others. W. Burkert, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*, Berkeley etc. 1979 pp. 99–122, and idem "Oriental Myth and Literature in the *Iliad*" in Hägg, *The Greek Renaissance*, pp. 51–56, adopts an intermediate position (discussed in more detail below). According to Burkert, Bellerophontes was originally a figure of oriental myth, who became fully hellenised in the course of time.

[28] See e.g. Hes. *Th.* 325, where the Chimaira is killed by Bellerophontes and Pegasos; and Pi. *Ol.* XIII, 119– 129, written ca. 464 B.C. for Xenophon of Korinth. In some versions Pegasos is ridden by Perseus, who obtains the horse immediately after the death of Medousa before continuing on his journey to Andromeda.

[29] Schol. ad *Il.* VI, 155; Belleros is the tyrant of Korinth. But see the alternative explanation in Apollod. *Bibl.* II, iii, 2, where Bellerophontes has accidentally killed his brother; cf. the "purification motif" in the story of Penthesileia.

[30] Astour, *Hellenosemitica*, Ch. III.

[31] Drews, "Argos", p. 122. Drews argues that the word "Argos" in epic usage does not refer to Argos in the usual sense of the word, but to "heroic Greece", which may mean Thessaly. He points out that Eumelos (ca. 700 B.C.?) connected Ephyre with Korinth, but that Korinth is one of the oldest toponyms in Greece.

[32] In the Catalogue of Ships Argos and Tiryns belong to the kingdom of Diomedes (II 559–563), while Korinth and Mykenai belong to Agamemnon (II 569–577). According to Schol. *Il.* VI 155 Proitos was king of Tiryns. The debate on the Catalogue can be brought to bear on the question of Ephyre if desired, but my examination of this discussion does not augur well of any solution coming from that quarter. Kirk, *Nature*, pp. 150–151 points out the correspondence between Bellerophontes and Perseus in the nature of their heroism and in the fact that they both ride Pegasos. He also supports the idea that the Chimaira was originally located near Korinth as well.

[33] For an analysis of the term "Orientalising" in this connection see A.C. Gunter, "Models of the Orient in the Art History of the Orientalizing Period", in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and J.W. Drijvers, (eds), *Achaemenid History. V. The Roots of the European Tradition*, Leiden 1990, pp. 131–147.

exchange as a continuous process extending from the late second millennium to the end of Antiquity, varying in terms of scale, emphasis and content. The story of Bellerophontes is a good illustration of these shifts of emphasis. At first it was taken to be evidence for an early borrowing,[34] but more recently it has been claimed that the Bellerophontes episode displays "late" features.[35]

The relations between East and West crop up in the various aspects of the story. The role of Proitos' wife Anteia[36] is often referred to as the "wife of Potiphar motif" because it is best known from the story of Joseph in *Genesis* book 39. All the same, there are other Greek versions: Peleus and the wife of Akastos;[37] Idaia, the second wife of the Thrakian king Phineus, who blinds the sons from his first marriage;[38] and Phaidra and Hippolytos in Euripides' *Hippolytos.*[39] It would be unreasonable to regard all these cases as the immediate result of oriental borrowings. In the first two cases the obtaining of dynastic power is an important ingredient of the motif, but in Euripides' tragedy this is certainly not the case, while in the passage from the *Iliad* a part is played both by Proitos' anxiety at Bellerophontes' qualities and by Anteia's passion. The Chimaira, a composite creature with a lion's head,[40] certainly makes a very oriental impression, but the first Greek illustrations of the destruction of the monster by Bellerophontes match the mental climate which Starr has characterised as "the exorcism of fear" of ca. 720–650, by which he is referring to internal Greek developments.[41] Furthermore, Bellerophontes' descent is by no means clear-cut. In the Greek versions he has a double paternity, like Theseus and other heroes: sometimes he is treated as the son of Glaukos[42] and sometimes as that of Poseidon Hippios.[43] The latter line of descent explains his reputation as the first horse-tamer and owner of Pegasos.[44] Astour, on the other hand, considers that Bellerophontes displays a striking resemblance to demigods from the Near East,[45] and Malten regarded both Bellerophontes and his winged steed as incorporations of the Sun God of Asia Minor.[46]

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[34] See the quotations from Lorimer and Webster above, to whom we can add Nilsson, *Homer and Mycenae*, pp. 261–263. Nilsson considers that both the alliance of the Lykians with the Trojans, although the former lived in southern Asia Minor, and the friendly relations between the families of Glaukos and Diomedes, point to long-standing contact between the Mykenaians and the Lykians. He locates the story of Bellerophontes in the vicinity of Tiryns, and later in Lykia.

[35] Kirk, *Nature*, pp. 150–151 regards the journey to Lykia as an element which does not date very far back. Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, p. 526 and Prinz, *Gründungsmythen*, p. 100 treat the figure of Bellerophontes himself as relatively late. Burkert, "Oriental Myth" in Hägg, *The Greek Renaissance*, pp. 51–56 rejects the idea that the Bellerophontes episode was a creation of the Peisistratid recension. He argues for a dating of the text of the *Iliad* in the first half of the seventh century and places the creation of the Bellerophontes episode in more or less the same period, because the Lykian civilisation is archaeologically attested from ca. 800 BC, while the earliest illustrations of Bellerophontes and the Chimaira date from the first half of the seventh century. See too M.L. Schmitt, "Bellerophon and the Chimaira in Archaic Greek Art", *AJA* 70, 1966, pp. 341–347, and below, p. 342.

[36] Apollod. *Bibl.* II, iii, 1–2 contains a summary of the passage in the *Iliad*, but now Proitos' wife is called Stheneboia.

[37] There are a number of different versions of the relations of Peleus with Akastos. The first with the "wife of Potiphar motif" is Pi. *Nem.* IV, 57ff. and V, 27–35 (ca. 480 B.C.), where the queen is called Hippolyte! All the versions are situated near the city of Iolkos, which was eventually taken by Peleus. There is a disputed reference to the existence of the story in Hesiodos, cf. Porph. *Quaest. ad Hom. Il. pert.* p. 93.

[38] Schol. Ap. Rh. II, 178; and Soph. *Ant.* 980.

[39] No version of the story of Phaidra is attested earlier than Euripides.

The question of the function of the story rounds off this East-West discussion. Prinz adduces extensive arguments to support a view advanced earlier by Malten, that the story in the *Iliad* provided the kings of Lykia with a Greek hero as an ancestor. The choice of Bellerophontes as this ancestor was by no means surprising, since the fact that he had hardly been incorporated in the Greek local traditions made him an eminently suitable figure for new mythic moulding.[47]

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[40] This is a decisive argument in Malten's view of Bellerophontes, "Bellerophontes" passim. For an iconographical analysis of the Chimaira see Burkert, "Oriental myth", p. 52.

[41] Starr, *The Origins of Greek Civilization*, pp. 279– 283.

[42] Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, p. 526 points out that in the *Iliad* Glaukos only *seems* to be the father of Bellerophontes; the king of Lykia recognises his divine origin after his marvellous exploits. The wording of Glaukos' insight in this line (VI, 191), however, does not bear any correlation with the rest of Homeric diction; p. 526, n.5. For an analysis of the double paternity in the myths of Theseus, see C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *Theseus as Son and Stepson*, London 1979.

[43] Roscher, *Lexikon*, s.v. Bellerophon, identifies Glaukos ("Gleaming") with the sea. Poseidon Hippios, as the name indicates, is the god of horses, which is not incompatible with his role as lord of the deep waters. For this figure of Poseidon, see W. Burkert, *Geschichte der Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart 1977, pp. 112–115 and 217–219.

[44] Cf. Pi. *Ol.* XIII, 163.

[45] Astour, *Hellenosemitica*, Ch. III.

[46] L. Malten, "Homer und die Lykische Fürsten", *Hermes* 79, 1944, pp. 1–12, esp. pp. 11–12.

This is also the role of the hero in the pseudo-Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women.*[48] (Eurynome), the wife of Glaukos, is impregnated by Poseidon and gives birth to Bellerophontes. This is followed by the deeds of Bellerophontes, his marriage to the daughter of (Iobates), the king (of Lykia), and their children. The heroic deeds mentioned in the text are the winning of Pegasos and the destruction of the (Chimaira).[49] Schwartz notes that *Iliad* VI ascribes more heroic feats to the hero than the *Catalogue* does. He assumes that the author of the *Catalogue* was interested in the description of the *heroine.* A brief reference to the stature of the hero whom she bears, and to the circumstances under which the descendants of the god can still claim a putative origin from a human father, is therefore sufficient.[50] Schwartz's general conclusion is that:

> The choice of the *stemmata* of which the *Catalogue* consists was made in the first place and corresponds to the political situation in North-East continental Greece at a given moment. As the Homeric poems flattered certain Ionian aristocratic families, the *Catalogue* did the same, *mutatis mutandis*, for the aristocratic traditions of a local nobility. A work of this kind could only have been created in a setting in which epic poetry linked to certain families inspired both its content and its form.[51]

According to these scholars, the Homeric and pseudo-Hesiodic versions of the story of Bellerophontes, his origins, exploits and descendants therefore correspond in terms of function. Both in

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[47] Prinz, *Gründungsmythen,* p. 100. Of course, his arguments are not the same as those of Malten, "Homer" 1944.

[48] Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia,* Ch. II, has added a new fragment, PIFAO 322, to P.Berlin 7497 and P.Oxy. 421. I am here summarising his arguments. For the accepted reconstruction of the text see *FrHes,* 43a M&W. Eurynome is an older addition based on Hyg. *Fab.* 157 (Neptuni filii); it is omitted by M&W; see F43a, ad vv.70ff.

[49] The names which are not included in the fragment are here given in parenthesis to facilitate comparison, but it is important to bear in mind that they are supplements. Cf. *FrHes* F 43a vv.88ff M&W.

[50] Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia,* p. 272.

[51] Ibidem, p. 629.

Asia Minor and continental Greece the myth could be utilised to furnish a respectable genealogy for a new aristocracy.[52] This special treatment of epic material depended on older, well-known traditions and must therefore be dated after the heyday of these traditions.[53]

Let us now turn to consider Bellerophontes' Amazonomachy in more detail. Glaukos' speech containing the life of Bellerophontes (*Iliad* VI, 145–211) begins with the paternal genealogy of the hero: Aiolos—Sisyphos—Glaukos—Bellerophontes, and concludes with his descendants: Hippolochos—Glaukos. These are the poles between which the hero's *Werdegang* is situated. The destruction of this darling of the gods is planned, but he crushes his opponents instead. The hero's [kleos] is based on four feats: the struggles with the Chimaira, the Solymoi, the Amazons and the Lykians. Just when his glory has reached its pinnacle, however, he incurs the enmity of the gods and turns his back on humankind. The text does not motivate this change in his destiny, leaving open the suggestion that he is overwhelmed by a desire for revenge or afflicted by insanity. His prosperity gradually wanes: two of his children meet a premature end, and we learn nothing more about the hero himself. The text thus reveals a symmetry of give and take: fate first smiles on him and then deprives him of all his good fortune.

The impression of a systematic reciprocity is reinforced if we consider the involvement of the gods in Bellerophontes' life story. The relation between his family and the gods is one of ambivalence and duplicity.[54] His grandfather Sisyphos was the most cunning of all men (153).[55] He even managed to get the better of the gods and death, but one of the gods apparently managed to cuckold Glaukos. They gave Bellerophontes beauty and the vigour of youth (156), and they were on his side when he was banished to Lykia (171). It is also trickery which brings Bellerophontes to Lykia, for although Aphrodite is not mentioned by name, she is presumably responsible for Anteia's passion. Although the Chimaira is a divine creature, Bellerophontes defeats her by following the instructions of the gods. When Bellerophontes returns from his heavy combat, the king recognises his divine origins. Zeus chooses his daughter as a lover. Now Bellerophontes is suddenly hated by all the gods. His defeat of the Solymoi is now matched by the loss of his son at the hands of the Solymoi through Ares' doing. He has defeated the [Amazonas antianeiras], and his daughter bears Sarpedon [antitheoon] as a son to Zeus, but Artemis [chrusanios] kills her in anger.[56]

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[52] De Jong, *Narrators*, pp. 162ff. also identifies this genealogical dimension as the main function of the Bellerophontes episode in the *Iliad.*

[53] Prinz, *Gründungsmythen*, pp. 99–101 notes that Sarpedon's genealogy in the Bellerophontes episode in *Iliad* VI deviates from that in the *Catalogue* (*FrHes* F 140 and 141, MW); in the latter text Sarpedon is the son of Zeus and Europa, the brother of Minos and Rhadamanthys. Prinz considers the pseudo-Hesiodic version to be the older of the two.

[54] For a good account of trickery and duplicity as features of the Greek "pattern of culture" see Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire*, pp. 75ff.

[55] On the cunning of Sisyphos, his relation with Korinth, and his grandson Bellerophontes, who is able to ride Pegasos, the son of the Gorgon, see M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *Les ruses de l'intelligence. La mètis des Grecs*, Paris 1974, pp. 178–202.

The more we examine Glaukos' speech, the more compact its structure turns out to be.[57] The most surprising effect, however, is the sudden volte-face in the story when Bellerophontes is deprived of all he had by the gods. What has happened? Why has the hero incurred their enmity, and why does Artemis kill Laodameia "in her anger"? As the narrative in the *Iliad* is silent on all these points, the interpretation of this theme requires us to go beyond the epic version, though an analysis of the narrative as a whole will reveal the place occupied in it by the Amazons.

Consideration of the structure of the passage as a whole does enable us to clear up one point. The narrative is organised in terms of symmetries: a god sleeps with his mother, a god sleeps with his daughter; a Lykian sends him to his death, he kills the Lykians; he kills the Solymoi, the Solymoi and Ares kill his son. The killing of the Amazons should therefore be symmetrical to the anger of Artemis and the killing of Bellerophontes' daughter. What light is shed on the episode by an examination of the figure of Artemis?

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[56] If we follow the fate of Glaukos in the *Iliad* to the end, we see how Zeus robs him of his senses and gets him to exchange his valuable accoutrements for the simple armour of Diomedes (VI, 234–236). De Jong, *Narrators*, pp. 162ff., does not include the fate of Glaukos in her analysis, which is confined to Bellerophontes. This conclusion, however, as well as the introductory passage, belongs to the context in which the story of Bellerophontes functions.

[57] For the structure of the text of Bellerophontes's exploits in terms of its view of gods, humans, men and women, see above, pp. 162–163.

With the exception of its application to Artemis in the passage under discussion, the epithet [chrusanios] is only applied to Ares in Homeric epic.[58] "With the golden bridle" is an uncommon adjective, which refers to the use of (war) chariots. In epic they are used to drive to or over the field of battle, but they do not have a function in the fighting itself, which is done on foot with spear and sword. As a huntress, however, Artemis is above all an archer, whose darts strike both animals in the woods and fields and human targets.[59] This does not absolutely rule out riding in a war chariot, but it would certainly be an awkward thing to do. Moreover, since the epithet is only used with reference to deities, it is more attractive to think of a use of chariots which above all indicates the power of a deity, rather than to suppose a reference to war chariots.

Deities of both sexes are believed to ride triumphantly through their own territory in a chariot. For instance, in his *Oidipous at Kolonos* Sophokles applies the epithet [chrusanios] to Aphrodite when the chorus describes the beautiful scenery near Kolonos as the favourite resort of the gods.[60] A strict association with war (chariots) is not very likely for a goddess of love,[61] and particularly so in the context of this description. Artemis is depicted with a chariot on illustrations dating from the end of the sixth century, first in the company of other deities, later by herself as well.[62] As such, these are not battle scenes either. The epithet in the *Iliad* passage is therefore unlikely to refer to war chariots or to the martial aspects of Artemis, but should be taken as a reference by synecdoche to her power as a goddess. And that power should not be underrated.

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[58] *Od.* VIII, 285. The context is the well-known story in which Hephaistos catches the adulterous Aphrodite and Ares in a net. The use of a "bridle" would be very ambiguous at this point! It is more likely that [chrusanios] is here used as a generic epithet, which may be interpreted as an indication of the power of a deity.

[59] *Il.* XX, 39–40, fighting on the Trojan side.

[60] Soph., *O.C.*, 693.

[61] Like her original *persona* Ishtar, however, the Greek Aphrodite is also recognised as a goddess of war, though only incidentally. See too Burkert, *Geschichte der griechische Religion*, pp. 238–239.

[62] *LIMC*, s.v. Artemis. On a chariot nos. 1196–1228. The first portrayal of Artemis alone on a chariot is no. 1196, a red-figure Boiotian vase from ca. 430; all illustrations of this type nos. 1196–1209. The first portrayals of

Among the epic epithets for Artemis are Potnia Thèroon and Agroterè,[63] i.e. mistress of the animals and of natural life; her arrows, which bring about a rapid end, are particularly aimed at women.[64] These epithets are only incidental; they are no more than indications of the especially important functions of the goddess in real life, which played no part in the epic material. An essential aspect is Artemis' role as mistress of life, which is above human powers.[65] Life in this sense concerns both nature and the animals of the wild and human life, which is renewed through the bodies of women. Both aspects converge in the notion of virginity, an essence which may not be violated and which will nevertheless be lost, a loss which is inevitable but not without its price. For young girls and women, Artemis is thus a goddess of enduring importance and proximity. She is the central figure in girls' initiatory rites,[66] the omnipotent power over the fundamental transition from virgin to married woman [gunè], from a child who does not yet menstruate through menstruation to marriage and defloration, as well as during childbirth and the period of the lochia.[67] She is a goddess of both giving and taking; death at childbirth is caused by the arrows of Artemis.

Artemis on a chariot together with Apollo and Hermes are earlier: the earliest is no. 1215, an Attic black-figure vase from ca. 520–500. Though these representations of Artemis with other gods in a chariot may imply a reference to the Gigantomachy, such a reading is hardly applicable to Artemis in a chariot on her own, even if iconographically the latter may stem from the first ones.

[63] E.g. *Il.* XXI, 470–471.

[64] The daughters of Niobe, *Il.* XXIV, 606; the mother of Andromache VI, 428.

[65] For a concise and effective description of Artemis see Burkert, *Griechische Religion*, pp. 233–237.

[66] Much less common and probably less specific for young boys. In extreme form in Sparta, see J.-P. Vernant, "Une divinité des marges: Artémis Orthia", in *Recherches sur les cultes Grecs et de l'Occident*, Naples 1984, pp. 13–27. The initiation of Athenian girls makes a specific relation between Artemis and Aphrodite possible and necessary, D.C. Braund, "Artemis Eukleia and Euripides' *Hippolytus*", *JHS* 100, 1980, pp. 184–185; extensive interpretation of the cults of Artemis and their meaning in myth and tragedy H. Lloyd-Jones, "Artemis and Iphigeneia", *JHS* 103, 1983, pp. 87–102.

[67] H. King, "Bound to bleed. Artemis and Greek women", in A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt, eds, *Images of Women in Antiquity*, London 1983, pp. 109–127.

Virgins are particularly associated with the goddess, while adult women must submit to her sphere of influence and may endeavour to ward off her malevolent influence or to evoke her protection. Through this power over life in the female body, Artemis is the goddess who divides the sexes. She herself is unremittingly virginal: she controls life without producing life, she sheds blood without suffering herself.[68] In a certain sense, Artemis is the goddess of blood, especially, as Burkert emphasises, of the blood sacrifice.[69] The virgin has an unmistakably double role in all this: her capacity for bleeding makes of her the bearer of potential sexuality and new life, as well as the sacrificial offering: the slaughtered animal, the sacrificed girl and the woman who dies in childbirth are equivalents.[70] Men should take up a position *vis-à-vis* the power of Artemis, but they are essentially excluded from her sphere of influence. As Potnia Thèroon, Artemis is mistress of the terrain of the hunter, who is out to appropriate her animals. All the same, she remains outside the sphere of influence of men, above all far removed from the influence of male desire. The myth of Aktaion describes what happens to a man who has seen Artemis naked in the hunt, with all the erotic implications that bears.

It is this Artemis who was later associated with the Amazons.[71] Their martial spirit—expressed with the bow and arrow from the sixth century on—is certainly one facet of this.[72] However, the martial character of the Amazons, located in their male

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[68] King, "Bound to bleed", passim.

[69] Burkert, *Griechische Religion*, p. 237; cf. also *idem*, *Homo Necans. Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen*, Berlin/New York 1972, I 7, esp. pp. 73–75.

[70] Cf. also King, "Bound to bleed" and eadem, "Sacrificial Blood: the Role of the [amnion] in Ancient Gynecology", in *Rescuing Creusa*, pp. 117–126; and Loraux, *Tragic Ways* pp. 23, 33–34, 44–45, and passim; as Loraux recalls, sacrificed virgins are regarded as [gunaikes] upon their arrival in the underworld.

[71] Klügmann, *Amazonen*, p. 32 notes that the alleged foundation of the temple of Artemis in Ephesos is not an Attic tradition but an Ephesian one. In this context it is the virginity of the Amazons and their Artemis cult which are given prominence, while in Attic literary sources these items do not play an immediately striking role.

[72] For illustrations of Amazons with bows and arrows on Attic black-figure pottery, see below, p. 407ff. Archery and the use of a pelta later became standard attributes of the Amazons. See e.g. Schol. *Il.* III, 189: [antianeirai] in archery.

[thumos], is above all expressed in their relation with Ares. The essential aspect for the association with Artemis is the ambivalence of the Amazons as women without males, who are unmarried but in possession of a female body with all its potential sexual functions. As far as virginity is concerned, the literary sources make no explicit mention of the fact before the Hellenistic period;[73] it is only around 500 that the Attic visual material establishes a connection between [parthenoi] Amazons and Artemis.[74] The stories of procreation indicate that the Greeks did not imagine the Amazòns to be permanent virgins, at least not at that level of the narrative. As we have seen, these stories are in the first place a pseudo-realistic response to the question of why the Amazons did not die out, and they illustrate the concern about the physical continuity of this exclusively female [ethnos]. The clearest example of these preoccupations is probably the rape of Antiope by Theseus. Antiope, who was no doubt a virgin before the rape, does not want to associate with Theseus. She is snatched from the circle of her fellow Amazons like a girl in a country dance.[75] Euripides has incorporated this undesired defloration and pregnancy in his *Hippolytus*, where the hero only wants to recognise Artemis. His mother, the Amazon, and Artemis form a unit in contrast to that formed by the [gunè] Phaidra and Aphrodite. In short, the sources, which are mostly post-archaic, do not appear to refer implicitly to a single basic pattern in the physicality of the Amazons. It is therefore only justifiable to venture a few tentative hypotheses on the relation between the Amazons and Artemis.

Artemis' power over the virgin body and the blood it contains has an equally ambiguous significance in the ambivalent condition of the Amazons. The violent sacrifice of a young girl and her defloration function as analogous phenomena in myth and ritual, and both are subsumed under this power. The sacrificial death provides the young girl with a noble, "masculine" death, and symbolically with the body of a [gunè]. A girl loses blood when she loses her virginity, and only when she is recognised as a wife are her status and condition transformed from those of a [parthenos] to those of a [gunè]. An Amazon who engages in sexual intercourse undergoes the first phase of this process, but refuses to enter the second phase:[76] her physical condition holds her under the sway of Artemis. Throughout the process there is no trace of any influence on the Amazons by Aphrodite; their sexuality apparently remains out of range of the [aphrodisia]. This sexuality under the sign of Artemis is confirmed in the kinship interpretations discussed earlier, for despite the intervention of a male, even such a masculine one as Ares, the representation of the Amazon [ethnos] as an exclusively female community is maintained. Tyrrell refers in this connection to the kinship of the Amazons as a relationship of blood.[77] It is thus neither the defloration itself which affects Artemis' control over the Amazons, nor the resulting childbirth. The Amazons are only removed from Artemis' sphere when they are fully women: married—a possibility which is never realised—or dead—as in the case of Penthesileia.

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[73] For the virginity of the Amazons in connection with the martial goddess Athena, see Diod.S., III, 71. An implicit reference is contained in the epithet [anandros], which Aischylos attributed to the Amazons; see above, p. 179ff. [Anandros] can certainly mean "virgin": cf. Soph. *Trach.* 308–309, where Deianeira asks Iole whether she is [anandros] or [teknoussa]—still a virgin, or already deflowered, and inevitably pregnant. See G. Sissa, *Le corps virginal. La virginité féminine en Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1987, p. 139.

[74] See Chapter V.

[75] She stretches out her hands in a gesture of appeal, *LIMC*, Antiope II, nos. 10 and 11. On the significance of these groups of young girls see C. Calame, *Les choeurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque*, Rome, 1977.

There is no sign of these associations with Artemis in the archaic period until shortly before 500 B.C., except for the part of the Bellerophontes myth under discussion here. The poet of the *Iliad* has established a meaningful connection between Bellerophontes' Amazonomachy and the death of Laodameia, for Laodameia's death is to be explained in terms of Artemis' functions. As the mother of Zeus' son Sarpedon, Laodameia was no longer a [parthenos], but as long as she did not have a mortal husband she could not be regarded as a [gunè] either.[78] She had not fully completed the *rite de passage* from virgin to married woman, which left her vulnerable to the whims of Artemis. The goddess bore Bellerophontes ill will—in fact, she was furious with him—because he had killed the Amazons. Laodameia, his daughter, on the threshold of exchanging her status as a young girl for that of a married woman, has much in common with the condition of the Amazons, and she undergoes the death which Artemis is able to inflict on her.[79] The structural symmetry between the Amazons and Laodameia is underscored by the structure of the entire passage. In taking a life for a life, Artemis claimed victims who were not yet [gunaikes].[80]

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[76] We can therefore subscribe in part to Tyrrell's conclusion: "The message of the Amazon myth in the marital area is that the daughter must marry [. . .]. The Amazon is a figment of Greek, and particularly Athenian, mythmaking concerning marriage.", *Amazons*, pp. 127–128, although there is nothing particularly Athenian about this myth. However, Tyrrell is not really interested in Artemis: he describes her exclusively as a castrating goddess, *Amazons*, pp. 55, 77, 86. Moreover, if the Amazons are taken to be descended from Ares as their father and the nymph Harmonia as their mother, they ought to have a semi-divine status and hence be immortal, but this consequence does not emerge anywhere in the material, except perhaps in the Hellenistic interpretation of the Penthesileia motif.

[77] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, p. 55.

Athough Bellerophontes' deeds are closely interwoven with his other experiences, and despite the compactness and symmetry of the passage in the *Iliad*, it remains strikingly incomplete and contradictory. The recognition of his divine origin comes as a complete surprise after the unambiguous report of Glaukos' paternity in the patrilineal genealogy. The reason for the hostility of the gods is completely obscure, since they favoured Bellerophontes in every way until the moment of his downfall. On the other hand, Bellerophontes' temporary possession of the winged horse Pegasos is not mentioned, even though this might explain the conflict with the gods.[81] So even if the passage from the *Iliad* is the oldest and the most elaborate version of Bellerophontes' heroic life in antiquity, it still seems very likely that the poet was familiar with various stories about the hero, made a selection, and combined them to form a new whole. However, he has not managed to achieve a full synthesis, since the contradictions in the present text still betray the contours of the different versions to some extent.

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[78] On the dangerous transitional period from [parthenos] to [gyne], see e.g. A.E. Hanson, "The Medical Writers' Woman", in Halperin, *Before Sexuality*, pp. 309–337, esp. 327ff. with extensive references. For the ambivalent condition of the "virgin" mother, see Sissa, *Le corps virginal*, passim.

[79] For the striking phenomenon of heroes who undergo the same death as the god to which they form a human counterpart, see W. Burkert, "Apellai und Apollon", *RhM* 118, 1975, pp. 1–21, esp. 19. Laodameia means "ruler of the people"; cf. Andromeda, Penthesileia.

[80] On the taking of a life for a life from women caught in the transition between virginity and marriage, see too Burkert, *Homo Necans*, p. 75.

[81] For example, by analogy with the Ikaros motif, although this is not attested before the fifth century B.C.; see F. Frontisi-Ducroux, *Dédale. Mythologie de l'artisan en Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1975, p. 155.

It is important in analysing the place of the Amazonomachy in the heroic life of Bellerophontes to discover which of the Bellerophontes stories whose presence we have detected in the *Iliad* contained this Amazonomachy. Like the function of Achilles' fight with Penthesileia in Trojan epic, the Amazon motif must have had a function in and derived its meaning from the story of Bellerophontes' heroic exploits. What kind of a story was this? After all, Bellerophontes represents a different kind of hero to Achilles, as can be seen from the prominent combat with the monstrous Chimaira. In the epic tradition, such combats between monsters and heroes were placed one or more generations earlier than the Trojan heroes. In other words, discussion of the role of the Amazons necessitates a relatively extensive examination of their opponent, Bellerophontes.

To take the textual sources in chronological order, the *Theogony* (325) recounts that the Chimaira was killed by Pegasos and Bellerophontes; it makes no mention of the Amazons or any other feats. The Chimaira appears in a catalogue of monsters, some of which were killed by Herakles. The text is thus not confined to the single exploit of a hero. In the pseudo-Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* Bellerophontes is referred to as the slayer of the (Chimaira);[82] there is no mention of any other deeds. In Pindaros' XIII *Olympian Ode* we read that Bellerophontes tamed the winged horse:

> So mounted, out of the cold gulfs
> of the high air forlorn, he smote
> the archered host of women, the Amazons;
> and the Chimaira, breathing flame; and the Solymoi, and slew them [epephnen].
> On his fate at the last I will keep silence.
>
> (*Ol.* XIII, 124–129; tr. R. Lattimore)

Asklepiades of Tragilos (fourth century B.C.) tells the story of Bellerophontes' struggle with the Chimaira; sans Amazons.[83] The

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[82] *FrHes*, 43a M&W. The name of the Chimaira is a very likely supplement.
[83] *FGrHist* 12 F 13; schol. *Il.* VI, 155.

Chimaira recurs in the *Historiai* of Nikolaos of Damascus (fl. ca. 10 B.C.), in which Bellerophontes slays the monster, marries the king's daughter and is given half the kingdom;[84] no other deeds are mentioned. In describing the fertility of the region near the Halys, Strabon says that even the Amazons wanted to conquer it; Priamos and Bellerophontes are said to have fought against them.[85] The summary of Apollodoros' mythographic work follows the narrative in *Iliad* VI fairly closely, with the following variations: Bellerophontes went to Proitos to be purified of his unintentional homicide; Proitos' wife was called Stheneboia, the Lykian king was Iobates and his daughter Philonoe.[86] The description of the Chimaira follows Hesiodos, with the additional information that the monster was under the protection of Amisodaros.[87] Bellerophontes mounts Pegasos and performs his exploits: the text summarises how Iobates orders Bellerophontes successively to kill the Chimaira, do battle with the Solymoi and fight the Amazons. When all these opponents are dead, Iobates recognises Bellerophontes' power, though there is no mention of any divine origins.

In all these texts Bellerophontes features as the slayer of the monstrous Chimaira. His success is mainly due to his possession of the winged horse Pegasos, a privilege that is in itself a sign of his heroic status. The Amazons are only sporadically included in the catalogue of his deeds. This is curious, because the Amazonomachy is usually very important for the status of a hero. This explains why Amazonomachies, and later other kinds of contact with the Amazons, are gradually ascribed to an increasing number of notable characters.[88]

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[84] *FGrHist* 90 F 9.

[85] XII, 8, 6. Strabon continues with a quotation of the lines on Myrina's tomb Batieia (*Il.* II, 813–814), including a few details on the Amazons and their martial qualities. Myrina had acquired the epithet [polyskarthmos] because of her speed in preparing her war chariot.

[86] *Bibl.* I, iii, 2. The name of the Lykian princess is not mentioned in earlier texts. It reappears in later commentators; cf. Antikleia (Schol. Pind. *Ol.* XIII, 59); Kasandra (Schol. *Il.* VI, 155).

[87] See below, p. 42.

[88] For example, (epic and archaic) Herakles, Achilles, (late archaic) Theseus, (classical) Athenians, (Hellenistic) Megarians (Paus. I, xli, 7), Korinthians (Paus. II, xxxii, 9), Alexandros the Great, numerous eponymous stories in Asia Minor, and Pompeius (Plout. *Pomp.*, 35, 3–4).

In turning to the versions in Ploutarchos' *Moralia*, especially *Mul. Virt.* 247–248, we find variations on a theme which is organised in a different way from the previous one. The text is interesting enough to justify an extensive paraphrase.

What took place in Lykia seems like a myth, but it appears to be true all the same. Amisodaros, known as Isaras among the Lykians, left the Lykian colony near Zeleia with a pirate fleet, led by Chimarros, a terrible, bloodthirsty man. He captained a ship with a lion on the bows and a serpent on the stern. He caused the Lykians considerable trouble by endangering life on and near the sea. Bellerophontes overcame this man and followed him on Pegasos when he tried to escape. Bellerophontes also expelled the Amazons, but he was not treated fairly; in fact, Iobates was particularly unjust in his treatment of him. Bellerophontes thereupon entered the sea and prayed to Poseidon to make the land infertile as a punishment for Iobates. He returned after uttering his prayer, and a large wave flooded the land. It was an awesome sight as the sea rose up behind him and inundated the land. The men begged Bellerophontes to make the water recede, but when they failed to persuade him, the women approached him with their clothes drawn up. He modestly withdrew toward the sea, taking the wave with him. Some try to state the mythic element in a different way by saying that he did not call up the sea through prayer, but that the most fertile part of this flat area lies under sea level. Bellerophontes broke through the reef which keeps the sea from the land. When the sea rushed through the gap and covered the plain, the men tried to put pressure on Bellerophontes in vain, but the women surrounded him, commanded his respect, and managed to calm his wrath. Yet others claim that the Chimaira was simply a mountain with one side facing the sun. It reflected the sun, and in the summer it was so fierce and hot that it scorched the crops. Bellerophontes realised this and removed that part of the rock which reflected the most. However, when he met with ingratitude, he turned against the Lykians in his anger, but the women got him to change his mind. The least mythic of all is the version told by Nymphis in the fourth book of his *Herakleia*. According to Nymphis, Bellerophontes killed a wild boar that destroyed the crops in the land of the Xanthians, but he failed to receive an appropriate reward. He therefore begged Poseidon to punish the Xanthians. The whole plain was covered with a layer of glistening salt and became completely infertile because the ground had become brackish. This state of affairs continued until Bellerophontes asked Poseidon to cease his anger out of respect for the women and their prayers. That was why the Xanthians called themselves after their mothers instead of their fathers.

This text contains a number of fascinating themes, particularly the Euhemerist interpretation of the Chimaira. In the first place, the unusual structure of the narrative is important for the analysis of Bellerophontes' heroic life. In these versions, Bellerophontes is sent to rid the country of the Lykians of a calamity. There is absolutely no indication that this is supposed to spell disaster for him. Second, the hero does not receive his due reward; on the contrary, it is his failure to do so on which the story hinges. There is no mention of Bellerophontes' mortal origins: Poseidon is his father, a detail which is essential to the story. The hostility of the gods toward Bellerophontes is missing as well, replaced by the anger of Bellerophontes against the Lykians and his ability to mobilise his divine father against them as well. This series of narratives therefore deviates fundamentally from the Bellerophontes passage in the *Iliad* on a number of points. The correspondence between them is minimal.

The most intensive interpretation of these myths is the classic article by Pembroke, who used this text as the basis for his analysis of how Greek ethnography shaped the [aition] of Lykian matriliny. According to Pembroke, this text refers to the ambivalent attitude of Bellerophontes toward women: after overcoming them in the form of the Amazons, he must now recognise their superiority when they display themselves to him in their true form.[89]

It is certainly the case that women have the upper hand in all the Ploutarchan versions. Whether they overwhelm him by displaying their genitals,[90] convince him by their pleading [peitho], or command his sense of modesty and respect [aidoos], they manage to disarm the hero's sense of outrage. The relation of this motif with that of the Amazons, however, is not immediately obvious. In his structural approach to the problem, Pembroke points out that the motif of Poseidon's wrath and the theme of the inundation of land, rendering it unfit for cultivation, are common themes in Greek mythology. He assumes two strong connotations: Poseidon's loss of a specific territory as consecrated ground to another deity, and the establishment of patriarchal authority in the area in question. Pembroke sees an important example of both elements in the account of the punishment of the women of Athens, after the victory of Athena in the rivalry among the gods for the exclusive function of protector and civic deity of the [polis], for their devotion to Poseidon.[91] This would explain the link between the Amazons, as the negation of patriarchal authority, and the women of Lykia.

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[89] Pembroke, "Women in Charge", p. 24.

[90] For example, this motif is often interpreted as a reminder to Bellerophontes that he was born of a woman, and is therefore mortal; cf. Pembroke, "Women in Charge", pp. 24–25. However, to display the nude body, particularly the

For all its ingenuity, Pembroke's argument is not entirely convincing. The motif of Poseidon's flooding of the land is too obvious to serve as the connecting link between the stories, for it is only natural that Poseidon as the god of the sea should resort to this instrument to demonstrate his power. Besides, stories which are so far removed from one another in terms of location, date, adaptation and content cannot simply be used to throw light on one another's structure.

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genitals or buttocks, to one's opponent is to break one of the essential rules of martial protocol, which include recognition of the parties concerned as (armed) opponents. The nude body, and especially the genitals, confuse the imaginary arena of battle with other relations: sexuality and procreation (genitals), defecation and thus disrespect (buttocks). They are ways of symbolically disarming the opponent. For an extensive discussion of this gesture in antiquity, see H. Herter, *RAC*, s.v. Genitalia, section A III, c 3; pp. 19–21. On the cultic significance of this gesture in connection with the goddess Baubo see F. Graf, *Eleusis und die Orphische Dichtung Athens in vorhellenistischer Zeit*, Berlin & New York 1974, pp. 166–171 with Appendix III, and M. Olender, "Aspects of Baubo: Ancient Texts and Contexts", in Halperin, *Before Sexuality*, pp. 83–113. The phenomenon is also known from other periods and settings. There is a lively example of the display of the buttocks, once again in the context of a fight, in the account of a woman from Friesland in the front line of battle, as narrated by the Burgundian chronicler Froissart; see J. Huizinga, "Uit de voorgeschiedenis van ons nationaal besef" (1912), in *Verzameld Werk*, Haarlem 1948, vol. II, pp. 97ff. In the latter case, the gesture was no match for long-distance missiles: "[. . .] in the face of the enemy, she lifted her skirt and blouse and displayed her buttocks, only to be hit by a rain of arrows and killed by the warriors who had sprung on land." Huizinga, *Verzameld Werk*, II, p. 104.

[91] This myth is known in the version transmitted by Varro and cited by Aug. *CD* 18, 9. See Pembroke, ibid. and pp. 26–28.

The decisive objection to Pembroke's interpretation lies in the incidental nature of the presence of the Amazons in the Ploutarchan text. Ploutarchos provides at least four versions[92] of Bellerophontes' feats in Lykia, all of which have the same content: the hero rids the country of a menace, he receives no reward, he gets his divine father to bring about an inundation, and in the end he is won over by the women of Lykia. Only one of these versions refers to the Amazons at all, and then only incidentally, as if the narrator suddenly remembered that the hero had overcome not just the Chimaira but the Amazons as well. The detail that he rode Pegasos in the fight with the Chimaira is added in an equally off-hand manner. The reference to the Amazons in Ploutarchos' text is of a summary nature, strongly suggestive of a reference which has been retrieved from memory or from a text. Perhaps it was prompted by the reference to the Lykian king Iobates, who may have been mentioned in the *Catalogue of women*, and was at any rate alluded to by Apollodoros. The fight with the Amazons is only given the status of one of the cardinal deeds of Bellerophontes if the Ploutarchan version is regarded as the immediate continuation of these earlier texts. However, this attempt to establish a connection between the variants is unjustifiable, for the two types of narrative differ too much from one another.

The Types of Bellerophontes

The only way to unravel the Bellerophontes stories is to return to the oldest material and the first group of testimonia, and to compare them with various types of heroism which are to be found in Greek mythology. The only reason to discuss the typology at this stage is in order to gain insight into the Bellerophontes stories. After all, a particular type of hero derives his identity from a particular type of action, and the latter is expressed in narrative in a particular kind of story. There are two types which are relevant in relation to Bellerophontes: the Attis type;[93]

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[92] Ploutarchos' text contains four interpretations of Bellerophontes' role in Lykia and the significance of the Chimaira, while in the first version a Greek and a Lykian name refer to the man who brought the brigand to Lykia: Amisodaros and Isaras.

[93] For analyses of this heroic type see Burkert, *Structure*, pp. 99–122; *idem*, "Apellai und Apollo"; and Detienne, *Les Jardins*.

and what might be called that of the hero with a social function, best known from Perseus, Theseus and, to a certain extent, Herakles.

Myths of the *Attis* type, which are closely connected with ritual, feature a young [ephebos]. Although not of divine descent, he is the object of a goddess' love, who chooses him as her young partner. This capricious goddess, sometimes motivated by jealousy as well, casts off the young hero as suddenly as she became enamoured of him. The eventual fate of the [ephebos] is death, sometimes—as in the case of Attis himself—preceded by castration.[94] This type of story, which was current in many versions in the Near East from the second millennium B.C.,[95] was adopted in Greece in an unmistakably modified form.[96] The sexual motif which was so much to the fore in the oriental versions was veiled to a certain degree, and the goddess (Ishtar, Innana) was transformed into a female mortal of the "wife of Potiphar" type, such as Anteia or Phaidra. The core element of the story is that the [ephebos] does not experience human marriage and fatherhood, but remains attached to the world of the immortals, first as their favourite, later to his own cost. The sexual relation between the goddess and the [ephebos] forms an explicit contrast to the sexuality enshrined in human marriage and procreation. In various oriental versions—such as that of Attis and Dumuzi—the goddess strikes her loved one as he is about to marry a princess. The jealous intervention of the goddess thwarts this human marriage as she drives her chosen one to destruction.[97] In the Greek variants, best exemplified by Hippolytos, Adonis and perhaps Achilles as well, the hero is far removed from marriage and procreation; he meets his end instead. Hippolytos is even assigned complete abstinence and virginity. In connection with the comparison with the second type, it is important to note that the [ephebos] of the Attis type does not perform heroic deeds by killing monsters, for example.[98] His primary role is as the object of the desires and hatred of the gods.

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[94] Castration is often the result of an accident sustained while hunting, in which a wild boar—a male symbol—attacks the [ephebos]; Burkert, *Structure*, pp. 114–115. The story of Adonis also features a wild boar with fatal consequences. In the case of Bellerophontes, the boar is only to be found in the version of Nymphis, which typically displays the assimilation of this theme to the "Ploutarchan" variant.

[95] Cf. also Astour, *Hellenosemitica*, Ch. III.

[96] Ritual and myth are attested for Hippolytos, one of the most well-known Greek versions of this type, although most of the details of the myth are taken from Euripides' *Hippolytos*; see Burkert, *Structure*, pp. 99– 122. Detienne has shown how the myth and ritual associated with Adonis went their separate ways in Greece, while the underlying structure of both myth and ritual naturally contained the same themes, *Les Jardins*, pp. 129ff.

[97] Burkert, *Structure*, p. 110.

Bellerophontes displays a number of features of the Attis type.[99] In the *Iliad* he is an unmarried young man, described in the formulae as young and handsome (VI 156–157), and of human origin. Anteia falls in love with him, and subsequently tries to arrange his death. The original favour of the gods, which operates in various ways, eventually turns into capricious hatred; these changes of fate are mainly situated in Lykia. In the end he meets an obscure end, as both the *Iliad* and Pindaros report.[100] Do the gods resent his marriage to the Lykian princess and his attempt to settle among mortals with his family? Artemis [chrusanios] recalls Ishtar, who was worshipped as the Goddess with the Chariot in the late Bronze Age,[101] but Ishtar, a sexually active goddess who is depicted nude, is much more a precursor of Aphrodite, who forms with Adonis a combination of the type of heroism under discussion here.

The second type, the hero with a social function, is the absolute opposite of the Attis type. This hero is of divine descent, but he can also take his place among mortals as a result of his double paternity. His divine origin furnishes him with exceptional power or magical resources, which enable him to perform his heroic deeds: he rids the country of catastrophes, in particular monsters. He receives a reward for these feats: he marries the princess and is honoured by gods and mortals alike. In the second place, the social function of the hero is also linked to a genealogical motif: his marriage with the king's daughter provides a genealogy for the nobility.

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[98] Monsters sometimes appear in the oriental versions in a very different way. For example, in the Attis myth a bisexual monster is changed into the goddess Agdistis and her younger male partner Attis; see Burkert, *Structure*, p. 110.

[99] See also Burkert, *Structure*, pp. 114–115.

[100] There is only circumstantial evidence for a (ritual) death of Bellerophontes, cf. Burkert, *Structure*, pp. 111–118. Commentators on Pindaros regard a ritual and myth connected with Bellerophontes' activities in Korinth as very likely; see L.R. Farnell, *Critical Commentary to the Work of Pindar. The Olympian Odes*, London 1932, Amsterdam 1961/2, pp. 97–98.

[101] Burkert, *Structure*, p. 114.

The story of Bellerophontes is clearly linked to this type as well. Bellerophontes suddenly turns out to have a divine father: the *Iliad* (VI, 191) does not provide any details on this score, but the *Catalogue* identifies his father as Poseidon. The disaster from which the country must be freed is at any rate the Chimaira, which crops up in all the sources. The *Iliad*, Pindaros and Apollodoros give the triple catalogue of Chimaira, Solymoi and Amazons, while the *Iliad* adds the victory over the Lykians to the list. The heroic feat meets with its reward: Bellerophontes marries the daughter of the Lykian king (*Iliad* VI, 192–197). The king is only named in the later sources; the name Iobates is a supplement to the fragmentary text of the *Catalogue*. The anonymity of the Lykian princess in the early testimonia is in contrast to the many mothers who are identified by name in the *Catalogue of women*. This is surprising in that scholars such as Schwartz, Prinz and in a certain sense De Jong consider that the *Catalogue* and the Bellerophontes passage in the *Iliad* must have had the same function of providing genealogical legitimation for a new aristocracy. The later tradition names Bellerophontes' mother, and her name—Eurynome—has now been inserted as a supplement in the pseudo-Hesiodic text, where she and her divine and mortal partners provide the required genealogy for Bellerophontes' descendants.[102]

We are bound to conclude that the two types are structurally incompatible. The Attis type displays an explicit hostility to marriage with a mortal, while in the second type this marriage provides the very *raison d'être* of the story, at least as far as its genealogical function is concerned. Without the marriage with the princess, the line of descendants of the god Poseidon would stop at Bellerophontes. There is also a crucial distinction between the two types regarding the fate of the hero. While the Attis type is outside society and comes to a sorry end, the successful hero of the second type wins glory and posterity. The fact that these two totally different kinds of narrative intersect in the Bellerophontes complex is important for a number of reasons.

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[102] See above, note 49.

First, it enables us to gain some insight into the composition of the earliest Greek text on Bellerophontes, the passage in the *Iliad.* Apparently, there were two variants of his heroic role at the time of composition of the *Iliad.* At some point in the process of composition of the epic, they were combined in the narrative that we have. The incompatibility of the two heroic types and thus of the narratives in which they are embedded is still evident in the Homeric text. Both versions can be traced in the cracks in the passage from the *Iliad*, so that each of them can be assessed in its own right. One of these two variants, extending into the genealogy in the *Catalogue*, was composed in hexameters, like the epic in which it is incorporated. As we have seen, the genealogical *Catalogues* are considered to be poetic and social artefacts which made use of the resources and sometimes of the content of the epic hexameter to result in a new genre, derived from epic but with a new function. This catalogue poetry, which must have reached its peak before the end of the sixth century,[103] was probably accompanied by a parallel development: the presentation of the feats of heroes in cycles—the most well-known being that of Herakles—and the attribution to them of a character resembling the *vita.*[104] It could be stated that the hexameter epic is the original context of these heroic tales, from which both the catalogue versions and the cycles contained in visual representations derive.

The essentially different message and context of the hellenised Attis versions is an equally important factor. Research on oral transmission has shown that context and function entirely determine the content of the narrative.[105] Bellerophontes as a hero with a social function, forming the link in a genealogical story told in hexameters, is certainly very different from the figure of

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[103] "Tout ceci suppose, d'ailleurs, des stratifications dont les dates sont indèterminables et dont le *terminus ante quem* est l'extreme-fin du VIe s. a.C." Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, p. 629.

[104] This phenomenon is almost exclusively documented in the visual arts of the period. The Theseus cycle was created towards the end of the sixth century, see Brommer, *Theseus*; the first serial depictions of the labours of Herakles are to be found on the metopes of the mid-sixth century temple in Selinous, but the cycle of the Twelve Labours does not really get under way until the end of the century; see Brommer, *Herakles.*

[105] See Vansina, *Oral Tradition*, for the general characteristics of these various kinds of transmission.

Bellerophontes who displays a resemblance to Hippolytos and structural parallels with Attis and Dumuzi. Mythical heroes of the Attis type feature in a completely different kind of context, and thus in a different source of narrative traditions. It is not very likely that these stories also circulated in hexameter poetry. Although aspects of these "Attis myths" might be incorporated in hexameter epic, as is the case for Bellerophontes and probably for the epic figure of Achilles as well, these myths were closely connected with ritual and functioned in a completely different environment to that of epic. Were they narrated in prose, or in a different genre of poetry? In short, we are confronted by two different narrative genres and two essentially different versions of Bellerophontes.

If a character is transferred from one oral genre to another, the figure is adapted to the new context, as the case of Achilles demonstrates. The process that takes place within a single cultural framework is comparable to what happens when a motif is transferred from one culture to another. The transfer of a motif from one tradition to another cannot be effected without a transformation in the nature, purport and wording of the story, and the *persona* of the leading character also changes when that character is transferred to a different narrative genre.[106]

We can now attempt a very tentative reconstruction of the composition of the Bellerophontes episode in the *Iliad.* The contours of a tentative chronology begin to emerge if we assume, as we surely must, that Burkert and many other scholars are correct in assuming that the Greek heroic figures of the Attis type derive from the oriental variants, which are certainly older than the *Catalogue* poems and are probably older than Greek epic in hexameters as well.[107] No one has found arguments to determine whether Bellerophontes as a hellenised Attis type is older than Bellerophontes as the slayer of the Chimaira; in this respect there does not seem to be an obvious core in Bellerophontes' role as a Greek hero.[108] Burkert has proposed to date the text of the *Iliad* in the first half of the seventh century, and to regard the Bellerophontes episode as a creation dating from roughly the same period, because the archaeological record for Lykian culture goes back to ca. 800 B.C., while the first depictions of Bellerophontes and the Chimaira date from the first half of the seventh century.[109] However, following the consensus regarding the *Catalogue* poetry, it may be taken to be almost certain that the genealogical context and the purport of the narrative in *Iliad* VI are of a relatively late date. If the latter dating is upheld, the Bellerophontes episode in *Iliad* VI 145–211 must be dated between the middle of the seventh century and the end of the sixth at the latest.[110] The connection between the Amazons and Artemis, which is bound up with the structure of the passage, also points to a relatively late date. Taking the debate on the date of the *Iliad* into account, the second half of the seventh century would therefore be the latest possible date. This complex of factors suggests that the Bellerophontes episode is one of the latest elements in the composition of the *Iliad*. Now, it is remarkable that neither of the two types of heroic narrative has formed the synthesis of the two types, since the process of borrowing and adjustment is not complete. It would appear that the genealogy, true to its genre, has been closely tied to the heroic deeds and then draped over the Attis type. This may indicate that a more coherent version of the heroic deeds of Bellerophontes to which the poet of the *Iliad* might resort did not exist, certainly not in hexameter poetry. In other words, it

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[106] Gould provides a series of convincing examples of this process in his analysis of the oral world of the Herodotean *Histories.* For example, in discussing the Persian aristocrat Harpagos, who features in the folktale on the youth of Kyros, he comments: "It is a measure of the difficulties that *we* have in coming to terms with the oral tradition on which Herodotus draws that it is with a shock that we encounter the same Harpagus, eater of his own son's flesh [in de folktale], as the general in command of the Persian army which carried out the certainly historical subjection of the Ionian Greek cities in about 540 BC." Gould, *Herodotus*, p. 33.

[107] The extremely long history of the creation of poetry in hexameters brings the earliest forms of this poetry closer to a date and location in the

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cultures of the Near East than many might expect; see Ruijgh, "Le Mycénien". Since even Burkert, *Structure*, refrains from making statements on the earliest versions and borrowings which cannot be traced in the sources, this murky past will not be explored further here.

[108] Pegasos and the Chimaira are dealt with below, p. 39.

[109] Burkert, "Oriental Myth", pp. 51–56; see 16.

[110] This conclusion is confirmed by those scholars who, on the basis of entirely different arguments, regard this part of Book VI as relatively late. Cf. e.g. Prinz, *Gründungssagen*, who follows Wilamowitz and Bethe in referring to the "jungere Z-Dichter", p. 100; and Shipp, *Studies*, pp. 255–258.

seems reasonable to regard the Bellerophontes episode in *Iliad* VI as a composition of the poet of the *Iliad*, who was the first to attempt to combine different variants in a single story and to present that story in the formulae of hexameter poetry.[111]

After stressing the differences between the heroic types and their stories, it is now fitting to concentrate on the underlying resemblances between them. It is precisely here that one can trace the transformation which the original oriental model underwent when it was adopted by Greek culture. This process is clearly illustrated in one theme from the Bellerophontes story. The motif "goddess falls in love with mortal" is relatively rare in Greek mythology.[112] Thetis originally puts up a stubborn resistance to marrying Peleus, but in the end she gives in to the demands of her real lovers, Zeus and Poseidon. Eoos discovers that she has made a painful mistake in falling in love with Tithonos as she sees her human lover growing old in immortality. The only such relation which runs as the goddess intended, to the best of my knowledge, is that between Aphrodite and Anchises, resulting in the birth of a son, Aineias. Relationships of this kind, in which the female, divine partner plays the superior role, are hard to reconcile with Greek patriliny. The tragedy of Hippolytos demonstrates a transformation of this motif by a split in the role of the goddess: the passion instigated by Aphrodite is experienced by Phaidra, a mortal woman, while Hippolytos has dedicated himself to the virgin goddess Artemis. In another variant of this process of adaptation, the beloved mortal, who initially receives all the goddess' favours, is transformed into the son of the goddess, who has a claim to receive gifts and protection. Achilles and Memnon, the sons born to Thetis and Eoos from their unions with mortals, are examples of this kind. They both include elements of the Attis type, as can be seen from the fact that they die young and without marrying or having children.[113] However, it is no coincidence that these figures do not belong (any more) to the same sphere as Hippolytos. This transformation into "son of the goddess" is very closely connected with the fact that the hero has been absorbed into a different set of narratives, in this case the (Trojan) epic. In Greek stories about slayers of monsters, on the other hand, the hero is generally the son of a male god, in accordance with Greek patrilineal principles. This is also true of Bellerophontes. Although there are clear reminiscences of the Attis type in the *Iliad*, Bellerophontes is the son of Poseidon in his role as a hero with a social function. The divine favours, which in the Attis type are originally sexual and therefore have a permanently exceptional character, have been transformed into the more familiar protection and gifts which the gods bestowed on their children.

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[111] It may be significant in this connection that the scholars referred to (West, Schwartz) are agreed that *Catalogue* poetry belonged to the hexameter poetry of the Greek mainland. Chalkis and Boiotia are usually regarded as the centres of this art, while Schwartz also refers to the aristocracy of North-Eastern Greece as the public for whom this genealogical poetry was intended, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, p. 629.

[112] There are a few goddesses who abduct young, mortal men: Eoos abducts Orion (*Od.* V, 121), Kleitos (*Od.* XV, 250), Kephalos (Hes. *Theog.* 986) and Tithonos, from whom she bears Memnon (*Theog.* 984; Hom. *Hym. Aph.* 218–238); Selene abducts Endymion, Aphrodite abducts Phaon and Adonis; in quantitative terms, however, this bears no comparison with the number of mortal women who are abducted by gods. The latter unions always result in pregnancy, which is rarely the case in the combination goddess-[ephebos]. See also Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire*, pp. 189 and 202ff.

The winged horse Pegasos is a gift of this kind. It associates Bellerophontes with both Poseidon Hippias and with Hippolytos. Burkert has traced the main outlines of the myth and the ritual,[114] in which Hippolytos appears as the young hunter who is initially the object of the affections of a god(dess), the Master of Mistress of Animals, only to die as a result of his/her intervention and to be transformed into a divinity. An important part is played in the ritual by the sacrifice of horses and bulls on the shore and by riding horses and driving chariots.[115] Burkert points out the many resemblances between Hippolytos and Bellerophontes; the main cult of the former was in Troizen and Athens, of the latter in Korinth. His analysis is followed by the remark that Bellerophontes "still had a chance to dispose of the Chimaera before he took his fall from Pegasus."[116]

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[113] Perhaps another such element is the extreme concern of these goddesses for their sons, even though this affection is naturally an aspect of their motherhood. For correspondences between the myths associated with Achilles and initiatory motifs, especially in connection with the role of Apollo as [ephebos], see the brief remarks in Burkert, "Apellai und Apollon", pp. 18–19.

[114] Burkert, *Structure*, pp. 112–115.

[115] In Euripides' *Hippolytos* the hero is killed through the intervention of Aphrodite and Poseidon as he is riding his chariot along the shore, but Burkert considers that Aphrodite is a part of Euripides' interpretation of the theme at this point, since the conclusion of the story does not depend on her personal intervention. All the same, Aphrodite is not a totally Euripidean

A definite picture emerges from this vague outline. Bellerophontes was regarded as a favourite of Poseidon and was given Pegasos, the horse that is itself probably related to Poseidon,[117] as a token of this favour. The same animal was responsible for his death in one way or another, as was the case with Hippolytos. It is not absolutely certain that Poseidon has replaced an original goddess, but the "wife of Potiphar" motif surely points in that direction. Perhaps the two versions existed side by side. At any rate, we can be sure that Bellerophontes was *not* a monster slayer in this role, since none of the young [ephebos] types has such a function. Indeed, the case of Hippolytos confirms this rule.

In the other type, Bellerophontes is the son of Poseidon and a mortal mother—sometimes named as Eurynome—and he kills the Chimaira. This opens up the possibility of a catalogue of deeds and a catalogue of descendants, once the hero has received his reward, the hand of the princess. Pegasos, who now features as a present from the hero's father Poseidon, can appear in this version as a miraculous aid in the fight with the monster.

To sum up, the literary material offers two essentially different Bellerophontes types: the Attis type, in which Pegasos is involved in the (ritual) death of the hero; and the type of the hero with a social function, in which Pegasos is the gift of his

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addition to the story which deviates widely from the original purport. See too Braund, "Artemis Eukleia". Apparently a number of characteristics which were combined in the earlier Mistress of Animals (attribution and denial of sexuality, favour and revenge, love and hatred/death) have been divided between the two goddesses, Aphrodite and Artemis, in Euripides' interpretation.

[116] Burkert, *Structure* p. 115. Is it fortuitous that Burkert refers to the killing of the Chimaira *en passant* in the same way that Ploutarchos refers to the riding of Pegasos? The correspondence between Bellerophontes and Dumuzi, Adonis and Attis (the "sources" of Hippolytos) recurs in the last of his versions, that by Nymphis, in which Bellerophontes kills a wild boar. For the wild boar as an element in the Dumuzi-Adonis myths, see Burkert, *Structure*, pp. 108ff.

[117] For Pegasos' descent from Medousa and the hint of Poseidon's role as the father, see above, p. 262.

divine father and in which the hero slays the Chimaira. The winged horse thus proves to be the link between the two versions. Burkert's remark cited above now acquires a clear context: if Pegasos' role in the death of the hero is stressed in the story, the killing of the Chimaira is out of place, while the *Iliad*, which focuses on the catalogue of deeds, does not refer to Pegasos. However, we can be certain that the motifs of the riding of Pegasos and the killing of the Chimaira came to be implicated with one another in the course of time. The literary *terminus ante quem* for this synthesis on the Greek mainland is the Hesiodic *Theogony*, a conclusion which is confirmed by the visual evidence. The riding of Pegasos—and perhaps the corresponding ritual sacrifice as well—occupied a central position in the Korinthian cults of Bellerophontes. The earliest Korinthian representations of Bellerophontes, dating from the middle of the seventh century, display him mounted on Pegasos and fighting the Chimaira, but separate themes can be discerned afterwards: the Chimaira and Pegasos, either apart or together, and only an occasional, late representation of Bellerophontes with the Chimaira.[118] The motif of Bellerophontes and Pegasos, on the other hand, retains its importance.[119]

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[118] D.A. Amyx, *Corinthian Vase-Painting of the Archaic Period*, Berkeley etc. 1988, vol. II, pp. 626–627. "The theme is conspicuous in early Attic black-figure, but in Corinthian ware it falls apart [. . .]. We can only guess why the story of Bellerophontes and the Chimaera, impressively shown on two PC vases, should have ended so weakly in Corinthian vase-painting, but the fact begs the fact begs for an explanation.", p. 627. One possible explanation is that the two vases with Bellerophontes as a monster slayer were the result of a narrative impulse (perhaps the *Iliad*), while the theme of Pegasos was an unmistakable constant in Korinthian painting and other arts.

[119] Schmitt, "Bellerophon", pp. 314 and 343; *LIMC* s.v. Chimaira, p.258 sees the portrayals of the monster as primarily decorative, but Schmitt's material does not support such an assumption entirely. Most of the "narrative" representations of the struggle of Bellerophontes and/or Pegasos with the Chimaira are due to appear in *LIMC* under "Pegasos". Bellerophontes is not individually indexed in *LIMC*, but is to be included under Pegasos! A number of comic passages from Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* are interesting in this connection. In VII, 26 the enchanted ass calls his rider Bellerophontes, implying that he is now Pegasos. The enchanted ass "flies" away in panic, mimicking Pegasos' flight from the Chimaira (VIII, 16). In another passage, dealing with the procession in honour of the goddess Isis, it is the privilege of a different ass to be clothed like Pegasos, while an old man represents Bellerophontes (XI, 8). It is striking that these summary references display the same pattern: Bellerophontes appears as the rider of Pegasos, while Pegasos—without Bellerophontes—is associated with the fight with the Chimaira,

Bellerophontes' Amazonomachy

If we now return from this typological excursus to the composition of the Bellerophontes story, there are two possible contexts for the Amazonomachy. Either the Amazons are one of the disasters from which the hero rids the country after his victory over the monster; or they are an expression of the underlying Attis motif, in which the hero shuns human sexuality in marriage and procreation.

It is necessary to begin with the Chimaira, because without this monster Bellerophontes is not a monster slayer—a function which forms the potential context for the Amazonomachy. The two earliest sources—which of the two is the earliest is an open question—are the passage in the *Iliad* and a passage from the Hesiodic *Theogony*; probably of later date is a fragment from the *Catalogue*. The *Theogony* passage is as follows:

> She [the monster Echidna] bore the Chimaira, who breathed
> unapproachable fire,
> terrible and huge, fleet-footed and strong,
> three heads she had; one of a bright-eyed lion,
> one of a goat and one of a serpent, a powerful creature;
> (lion-fronted and snake behind, a goat in the middle,
> and snorting out the breath of the terrible flame of bright fire).
> Her slew Pegasos and the excellent Bellerophontes.
>
> (Hes. *Th.* 319–325)

Lines 323–324 are identical to *Iliad* VI, 181–182, and since they render the preceding lines superfluous, they are taken to be a later addition to the text. Line 325 does not bear any resemblance to the *Iliad* apart from the inclusion of the name Bellerophontes.[120] The "unapproachable fire" (319), on the other hand, is a Homeric epithet, applied to the Chimaira in *Iliad* VI, 179.[121]

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recalling the formulation in *Theogony* 325.

[120] [tèn men Pègasos heile kai esthlos Bellerophontès]; cf. above, p. 162. The "bright-eyed lion" [charopoio leontos] is found in the plural in *Od.* XIII, 611: [charopoi te leontes]; in both cases the formula comes at the end of a line. For descriptions of the Chimaira see also Eur. *Ion*, 203–204: [tan pur pneousan enairei trisoomaton alkan]; and Eur. *Elektra*, 472–475: [leaina].

[121] [amaimaketos] is used of the sea in [Hes.] *Sc.* 207. Snell, ed. *Lexikon* s.v. [amaimaketos] notes that the etymology of the word is not known. Frisk

As we have seen, this passage from the *Theogony* forms part of a long catalogue of monsters, their descent and demise at the hands of famous heroes, with Herakles occupying pride of place. It is noteworthy that Pegasos is named first,[122] and not just as an equal partner of Bellerophontes instead of merely his steed, but as the protagonist.[123] Literally, the passage runs: "her slew Pegasos"—the verb is in the singular—"and the excellent Bellerophontes." Pegasos is already mentioned earlier in the passage (280–286), where his birth from Medousa and Poseidon and his fate are recorded: he flew from the earth and reached the immortal gods, where he resides in Zeus' halls and brings him the thunder and lightning.

The Chimaira appears at one other point in the *Iliad* besides in the story of Bellerophontes:

> So these two, beaten down under the hands of two brothers,[124] descended to the dark place, Sarpedon's noble companions and spear-throwing sons of Amisodaros, the one who had nourished the unapproachable [amaimaketèn] Chimaira to be an evil to many.
>
> (*Il.* XVI, 326-329)

As for the *Catalogue*, the text is too fragmentary for one to be certain about the wording, but a few crucial names are partially or fully legible: Sisyphos, Poseidon, Glaukos, Bellerophontes,

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suggested a relation with [maima-k], while the function of the a- is unclear. The meaning of the word is not entirely clear either: [maimao] is taken to mean "mit stürmischen Wesen", but also "unapproachable" from associations with [machè], according to the scholia. F. Müller Jzn., *Grieksch Woordenboek*, refers in this connection to the (outdated?) etymology from [mak-], raze, slaughter; cf. Maimaktèrion, November as the month of slaughter. [histon amaimaketon] in Pi. *Pyth.* I, 14 is interpreted as "very large" in *Lexikon* ed. Snell—but why not "indestructible"?

[122] The name [Bellerophontès] fits perfectly at the end of the line, which is the preferred position for proper names.

[123] Cf. also Eur. *El.*, 472–475, where the only explicit reference to the Chimaira's opponent is to Pegasos, although Bellerophontes' presence as the rider of the horse is implied. In view of the extremely condensed character of this passage and of the reference in *Ion*, 203–204, one should be very cautious in comparing the epic with the mythographers. For a mention of the Chimaira without Pegasos or Bellerophontes as opponents in epic hexameters, see *Hom. Hym. Ap.* 368.

[124] Nestor's sons Antilochos and Thrasymedes kill the Lykians Atymnios and Maris, XVI, 317–325.

Pegasos.[125] In recent reconstructions the Chimaira has been added with a compilation of words from the *Iliad* and the *Theogony*.[126]

The descriptions of the Chimaira in the *Iliad* and the *Theogony* undoubtedly draw on the same source. This can be seen not only from the virtually identical account of the monster, whose name is no more than the Greek for "goat", but also from the striking use of the word [amaimaketos] at different positions in the hexameter.[127] However, although it does not often name locations,[128] the catalogue in the *Theogony* is situated partly in an imaginary West, and partly in the central region of the Greek mainland. In the *Iliad* the adventures of Bellerophontes begin there too, but his heroic feats are transferred to Lykia. Moreover, in book XVI of the *Iliad*, the divine monster (VI, 180) has been set under the care of the Lykian Amisodaros. This figure does not reappear in this context until the Ploutarchan versions, where he features as the one who looses the disastrous pirate Chimarros on his fellow countrymen. Did the poet of the *Iliad* take this Amisodaros to be the Lykian king (later or elsewhere known as Iobates), who sends Bellerophontes out to perform his labours in book VI? The striking feature at this point is that in the *Iliad* two of the hero's opponents are *Lykians*: the Chimaira as the monstrous pet of Amisodaros, and the men of Lykia. If the poet of the *Iliad* stresses the location of these two feats in Lykia so much, does this imply that the Solymoi and the Amazons should also be included as part of an epic Greek representation of "Lykia", as Pembroke claimed?[129]

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[125] See *FrHes*, F 43a MW.

[126] [sun tooi pu/r pneiousan heloon katepephne Chimeiran, gème de p/ aida philèn megalètoros Iobatao..] etc. What follows after the / sign is a supplement.

[127] Discussion of this and other epithets applied to the Chimaira would exceed the bounds of the present study.

[128] The Gorgons, including Medousa, in the West *Th.* 275; Pegasos' birth there, 281–283; Geryon lives in Erytheia, which is probably situated in the West too, see *Kleine Pauly*, s.v. Erytheia, and Herakles drives his herd to Tiryns, 292; the Hydra of Lerna, 315, probably near Argos; Echidna bears not only the Chimaira but also Orthos and Kerberos, the two dread hounds, and the Sphinx, 326, who terrorised Thebes, and the Nemean Lion in the North-Eastern Peloponnese.

[129] Pembroke traced the Greek representation of matriliny and/or matriarchy in a complex of myths, including Bellerophontes' Lykian activities, "Women in Charge".

We find a somewhat different tradition relating to the mythical prehistory of Lykia in Herodotos I, 173. Europa had two sons (by Zeus), viz. Sarpedon and Minos. In their struggle for the throne, Minos was victorious and expelled Sarpedon and his followers. The latter travelled to Asia and ended up in Milyas, as present-day Lykia was called at the time, a country inhabited by the Solymoi. During the rule of Sarpedon the Lykians were known as the Termilai, as they had been called on Krete and as their neighbours still call them. However, when Pandion's son Lykos was driven out of Athens by his brother Aigeus, just as Sarpedon had been expelled from Krete, and sought refuge among the Termilai, they came to adopt his name in the course of time and became known as Lykians. Some of their customs resemble those of the Kretans, Herodotos adds, while others resemble those of the Karians. In one respect they are unique: ask a Lykian his name and he will give his own name, the name of his mother, the name of his grandmother, and so on. If a free woman bears a slave a child, the child is regarded as legitimate; but the children born to a free man from a concubine or woman other than his wife have no citizen rights at all, whatever his status may be.

This passage in Herodotos gives an idea of what the Greeks of coastal Asia Minor of his day thought about the traditions of the Lykians. We can conclude from it that the Solymoi were set somewhere in Lykian prehistory; that Sarpedon, who played an important role in Greek epic, was regarded as one of the ancestors of the Lykians; and that it was probably Sarpedon's generation which had to stand up to the Solymoi, since it was their territory which was occupied by the new-comers from Krete. On the other hand, the Solymoi seem to have been absorbed virtually effortlessly into the later Lykians. The absence of other testimonia makes it impossible to determine whether the Solymoi have been transposed from the *Iliad* into this story about the Lykians, or whether each source is reacting in its own way to a Lykian tradition. The latter possibility cannot be ruled out, since the only common names in the two texts are Sarpedon and Solymoi, while the stories not only differ from one another with regard to their purport, but they are in fact in mutual contradiction.

The crucial fact about the Lykians in Herodotos' eyes is their matriliny. As can be seen from Sarpedon's descent from

Europa,[130] making him a brother of Minos, the Lykians are traced back to Krete, reflecting the impression of a non-patriarchal heritage. It is not entirely clear what kind of a social and kinship organization the Lykians actually had, but we can be sure that it was not a matriarchy and that there was no clear-cut system of matriliny, although their kinship system probably deviated to some degree from the Greek form of patriliny.[131] This assumed matriliny, however, is the focus of attention in Herodotos' account. All the same, the ethnicon [Lukioi] is derived from an Athenian male, the system of female nomenclature lapses occasionally in the narrative,[132] and the Lykians are also referred to by their traditional name, Termilai.[133]

If we turn to Glaukos' speech in the *Iliad*, it is Bellerophontes who is the main actor. Neither the Kretan Sarpedon nor the Athenian Lykos are the new elements in the Lykian world, but Bellerophontes, who fulfils the role that Sarpedon was to perform two generations later in fighting the Solymoi and attempting to join the Lykian community. He becomes the grandfather of Sarpedon through his daughter, Zeus retains his position as father, and the genealogy can be continued. In this context the notorious "matriliny", which is such an intrinsic part of the idea of "Lykia" in the Ploutarchan testimonia, creates a genuine problem, since this time it is completely absent. Indeed, the structure and purport of the genealogical catalogue are and remain wholly patrilineal. It is thus unlikely that the compiler of this catalogue was aware of the reputation of Lykia in this respect. In the *Iliad*, and especially in book VI, the genealogy of the Lykians is fully in accord with Greek principles. Now, it is understandable that the preference for matriliny should be associated with the Amazons.[134] According to Herodotos, it was the Lykians themselves who observed this preferential rule, and the Amazons therefore represent yet another Lykian characteristic which stands in Bellerophontes' way. Yet this very passage in the *Iliad* does not betray any traces of such a matriliny. In short, there is no room in the complex of Bellerophontes as a hero with a social function, who combats monsters and other abnormalities and then marries the king's daughter, for this matrilineal element—you cannot have your cake and eat it. The Amazonomachy in book VI of the *Iliad* cannot therefore be explained in terms of the "Lykian" colouring of the narrative.

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[130] Europa has not simply taken the place of Laodameia, or vice versa, but there are vague connections. In some respects, Zeus' metamorphosis as a bull in the abduction of Europa and the initial swallowing up of the young woman in the sea recall similar actions by Poseidon. The wrath of the goddess, who regularly appears in connection with Zeus' affairs with mortals in the form of Hera's jealous interventions, is absent from the myth of Europa. On the other hand, Laodameia is struck by the anger of Artemis. In themes of this kind, the boundaries between such goddesses as Artemis, Aphrodite and Hera are not strictly demarcated, see e.g. Burkert, *Structure* on the Hera of Samos and her resemblance to the Artemis of Ephesos, pp. 130 and 135.

[131] S. Pembroke, "Last of the Matriarchs: a Study in the Inscriptions of Lykia", *JESHO*, VIII, 1965, pp. 217–247.

[132] For the common occurrence of patronymics in Lykia, see Pembroke, "Last of the Matriarchs". This is important for the narrative level of the story. Nevertheless, the role of the Athenian Lykos is primarily that of the eponymous hero, a type which enjoyed wide distribution, and is particularly common in Eastern Greece. The figure of Sarpedon might be seen as a trace of the older connection between Greece and Lykia, and the Athenian Lykos as a trace of the Ionian migration.

[133] Cf. Hekataios, *FGrHist* 1 F 10, Tremilai.

On the contrary, the dominant theme in other respects seems to be: Bellerophontes quarrels with the Lykians. In the *Iliad*, this has assumed the form of the battle with the Lykian warriors and perhaps also with the Solymoi. Bellerophontes' struggle with the Chimaira has been almost literally transferred to the Lykian domain. In the end, Bellerophontes remains a stranger in Lykia, and his role as a hero and monster slayer is no lasting success. It is even questionable whether the genealogical catalogue of Bellerophontes and his grandson Glaukos can be regarded as a success either, as so many have assumed. Bellerophontes' line dies out, with the exception of Glaukos, and at the end of the whole passage he is hoodwinked by the clever Diomedes. This is not the place to go into the background to the theme of Bellerophontes' quarrel with the Lykians, but it is very likely that this theme forms the connecting link between the Greek variants of his heroism and the curious construction of his life story in the *Iliad*.

The only way to answer the question of the narrative background to Bellerophontes' Amazonomachy in the *Iliad* is through a process of elimination. A Lykian aspect is now excluded: in this respect, the Amazonomachy must be distinguished from the fight with the Solymoi and the Lykians. If we return to the Attis type, which proved to be present in the *Iliad* in a variety of guises, the Amazons could be an expression of the structural opposition contained in that theme between the hero and human marriage. In that case, however, we run up against a paradox: Bellerophontes' opposition to the Amazons would then be a case of like fighting like. Although contradictions are not uncommon in mythology—they virtually dominate the Amazon mythology—such a paradox is too crass for credibility. First, putting up a heroic fight already involves a transformation of the Attis type. The best example of this is Achilles, whose *persona* has been fully adjusted to the epic despite its limited influence by certain aspects of Attis. The paradox which Achilles confronts in Penthesileia is based precisely on the structure of the epic: the contradictions between male and female, seen in terms of the protocol of battle. Marriage as such does not play a direct role here. The monster slayer, however, does not oppose those who resemble him: the Chimaira too is both more horrible than humans and a divine creature. Even if we leave these intricacies aside and concentrate on the theme "Bellerophontes is opposed to human marriage and procreation", there is then no reason to present the hero as a *warrior*, and certainly not to give him the role of the slayer of the very women who, like himself, are dedicated to the Master or Mistress of Animals and who shun marriage.

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[134] This is the basis of Pembroke's interpretation, "Women in Charge".

The alternative is a catalogue of disasters, beginning with the Chimaira, of which Bellerophontes rids the country; the transposition to Lykia may well be one of the reasons for eliminating Pegasos from the story.[135] The theme of the quarrel with the Lykians, as we have seen, is in fact the only way of accounting for the expansion of the fight with the monster to form a catalogue of feats: the Amazons as an [ethnos] fit in well between the other large groups of opponents, the Solymoi and the Lykians. All the same, there is no particular reason why they should belong in Bellerophontes' quarrel with the Lykians. As for the genealogy in which the catalogue is formally embedded, the version in the *Iliad* is hardly a satisfying narrative. These structural contradictions still hold in spite of the cleverly contrived coherence which has been brought to the extant text.[136]

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[135] Incidentally, Pegasos is only indirectly attested in the Attis type.

[136] See pp. 162–163.

To sum up, neither of the two types of heroism which can be traced in the story of Bellerophontes in the *Iliad*, nor the so-called Lykian context of the story, provides a natural setting for the Amazonomachy. On the contrary, the Amazons are hard to reconcile with the other themes in terms of narrative types. The Amazonomachy is only conceivable in a catalogue of Bellerophontes' feats at or very soon after the moment when the two heroic types were awkwardly combined to form a single account. In the light of these arguments, it may be supposed that Bellerophontes' Amazonomachy is a new motif which has been added to the life story of the hero in the extant version of the *Iliad.* Since it has no essential function in the various possibilities of Bellerophontes' heroism, the Amazonomachy remains a detached element in this respect. By contrast, the pseudo-Hesiodic *Catalogue* and the Hesiodic *Theogony* display an internally coherent picture of Bellerophontes as the heroic slayer of monsters.

It is now necessary to test this hypothesis in the light of the other textual and visual material. Pindaros' XIII *Olympian Ode* to the Korinthian victor in the foot-race, where the Amazons and the Solymoi feature in the list of the hero's exploits, has already been mentioned.[137] Another *Olympian Ode* (VIII, 61–63) recounts how Apollon hastens to Xanthos and to the Amazons with their noble horses and to the Istros. A later scholiast[138] explains this as a description of the god's journey from Asia to Europe: he went first to Lykia, then to the Amazons, who lived near the Thermodon in Paphlagonia, and then crossed over to the Ister in Skythia, the land of the Hyperboreans. The Amazons are probably also taken to live in the North in *Olympian Ode* XIII.[139] In view of the common assumption that the Amazons lived near Skythia or Themiskyra, as attested by Aischylos and Herodotos, Pindaros' geography is not surprising. The reference to the Amazons as archers is fully in accordance with the image that came to replace the epic descriptions from the middle of the sixth century on, though the connection between the Amazons and Lykia has been severed.

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[137] See 28.

[138] Schol. Pind. *Ol.* VIII, 62c (ed. Drachmann).

[139] Farnell, *Critical Commentary*, p. 97 interprets line 125, [aitheros psychroon apo kolpoon erêmou], which B.L. Gildersleeve, *Pindar. The Olympian and Pythian Odes*, New York 1890, Amsterdam 1965/2 p. 235 explained as "from the cold—because high—air", as the cold air of the North: "Pindar uses [kolpos] of remote corners of land, never of the heavens; nowhere else is Bellerophon imagined to fight the Amazons from the air as from an aeroplane." (The relevant lines are numbered 87–88 in Farnell's edition.)

While Pindaros' portrait of Bellerophontes and Pegasos must have drawn on the Korinthian version of Bellerophontes' *persona* and myth,[140] the series of deeds is an unmistakable echo of the lines in *Iliad* VI. This is particularly evident in the use of [epephnen],[141] which is given such an emphatic position in the *Iliad* passage. The sequence in Pindaros is Solymoi-Amazons-Chimaira, although the *Iliad* begins with the Chimaira. This change[142] may be due to the need to stress the fight with the Chimaira, the only motif that could be regarded as self-evident and which must have been one of the essential ingredients of the myth in Korinth. The reference to the Solymoi and the Amazons here is thus a citation by the poet, who was apparently familiar with what we now have as the text of the *Iliad.* However, Pindaros has retained the familiar, contemporary picture of the Amazons as living in the North and fighting with bows and arrows, resulting in a minor discrepancy, as the scholiast immediately noted and explained.

The series in Apollodoros also seems to be a paraphrase of the *Iliad,* as can be seen from the summary character, reflecting the structure of the Homeric version: Chimaira-Solymoi-Amazons. The name Iobates did not feature in the *Iliad,* but it may well have been found in the *Catalogue of women.* At any rate, the name of the Lykian king matches the "Lykian" aspect of the genealogy: Bellerophontes delivers the country of the plagues and marries the princess. Strabon is clearly dependent on the Homeric text. The Amazonomachy is apparently only attested in the literary tradition in the *Iliad* and in those texts which are immediately dependent on it. The other testimonia from this group—the *Theogony* and the *Catalogue of women*,[143] Asklepiades of Tragilos, and Nikolaos of Damascus—do not mention the Amazons at all.

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[140] See too Farnell, *Critical Commentary,* pp. 97–98. The taming of Pegasos occupied a central place in it, and Athena acted as protective goddess. Did this mean that Poseidon was assigned the role of the avenger? Pindaros tries to achieve a beautiful end by omitting Bellerophontes' fate, as in the *Iliad,* but recounting instead the Hesiodic theme of the adoption of Pegasos in the stables of the Olympians.

[141] Gildersleeve makes the same observation, *Pindar,* pp. 234–235.

[142] Gildersleeve, *Pindar,* p. 235 calls it a "purposeful variation", presumably referring to the literary aesthetic aspect.

The message conveyed by the archaeological material is as unambiguous as can be: there is no representation of Bellerophontes' Amazonomachy that can be identified with certainty. Bothmer, who provides the fullest survey of the Greek material, refers to a single representation on an Attic black-figure neck amphora from the second quarter of the sixth century. One side contains an Amazon:

> "[. . .] between (or rather behind) two heraldic sirens—as a reverse to a hunting scene in which a rider with an oriental cap, mounted on a winged horse, pursues a somewhat oversized deer. Perhaps the hunter is Bellerophon but it would be rather far-fetched to connect the picture on the reverse with Bellerophon's expedition to the Amazons, as known from Homer [. . .], Pindar [. . .] and Plutarch [. . .].[144]

We may entertain doubts about the identification of the hunter as Bellerophontes. In the many representations of Bellerophontes, he is portrayed with Pegasos fighting the Chimaira. The Chimaira appeared in various places in Greece in the seventh century, both as a "decorative" pictorial element, and at more or less the same time as a figure in a "narrative" context, viz. with Pegasos and/or Bellerophontes in a combat scene. The first tentative portraits of the Chimaira date from ca. 680, while clearer portrayals can be dated to around 660–650. In the course of the century the iconography tends to become stabilized in a type which was particularly popular in Korinth between 660 and 630. In this type, the monster has the body and head of a lion, a goat's head emerges from its back, and it has a serpent's tail.[145] The latest extant vase painting from Korinth dates from ca. 570. The figure can be found in Attic black-figure pottery from ca. 600, where the motif of the struggle between Bellerophontes and the Chimaira continued throughout the rest of the century. The vase discussed by Bothmer thus dates from a period in which the iconography of the Chimaira had already assumed a canonical form in various places. It was unnecessary for a painter with a modicum of talent to depict the monster carelessly as an "oversized deer".[146]

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[143] According to Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, pp. 272–277, strictly speaking this catalogue does not require the Amazons: in a genealogical series of this type, one heroic exploit is sufficient for the ancestor to guarantee the status of the descendants. All the same, the fight with the Amazons was such an important deed of prowess that it could only enhance that prestige.

[144] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 29. The representation is B II, no. 67; attributed by Beazley to the Painter of Louvre E 826 (*ABV* p. 91, no. 5). It should be noted that the cap usually referred to as an "oriental cap" should be regarded as a "northern cap" at this time; see Ch. V.

The battle with the Solymoi is absent from the visual record as well. This lacuna may be due to the scant decorative potential of the theme, but the great variety of combat scenes in the visual arts as a whole renders this explanation less plausible.[147] At any rate, the objection certainly cannot be raised against the Amazons. There are representations of all those who fought against the Amazons: Herakles, Achilles, Theseus, the Athenians, Dionysos—except Bellerophontes.

Finally, the Ploutarchan versions demonstrate a particular metamorphosis of the original theme. While the *Iliad* text presents the social function of the hero in the foreground, behind which the Attis type can be traced as an unwelcome variant, the two heroic versions are more or less fused in the later versions, though at the expense of the original intention. The Chimaira, once again under the protection of Amisodaros, has undergone a Euhemerist metamorphosis from a divine monster to a bloodthirsty brigand or a destructive natural phenomenon. The volte-face from favour to rejection is laid entirely to the account of the Lykian king. This is the most far-reaching transformation of the original Attis type. While the arbitrariness of the deities was a full ingredient of the theodicy in the archaic Greek versions, it has now become the ill-mannered whim of a monarch. Bellerophontes is certainly the son of a god: this element from the second heroic type has become an essential factor in the narrative plot. All the same, the relation between father and son has changed. In most of the archaic versions, the decision whether to support his son and to influence his destiny or not was an initiative of the divine father; now Poseidon bears a closer resemblance to a powerful patron who responds to the requests of his favourite dependant when asked to do so. The Attis type is still discernible in Bellerophontes' dysfunction with regard to human procreation—the failure to marry the princess—and the tragic denouement of the story. The Attis type also plays a part in the background to his powerlessness in the face of ordinary women (Lykian women in this case). The wild boar is still present, but now as a monstrous victim instead of culprit.

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[145] Schmitt, "Bellerophon" provides a more precise breakdown in stages than *LIMC*, s.v. Chimaira, pp. 257– 259; cf. also Amyx, *Corinthian Vase-Painting*, vol. II, pp. 626–627 and 660–662. There is some variation in the position and direction of the various animal components (lion, goat, serpent). By the end of the seventh century there are three main types: one Korinthian and two Attic. The three elements correspond to the literary testimonia in Hesiodos and Homeros. *LIMC* adds that the Chimaira is usually neuter, and on a few occasions it is even explicitly male, s.v. Chimaira, no. 41.

[146] The motif of Bellerophontes' Amazonomachy is also absent from the Hellenistic and Roman material; see too Hiller, *Bellerophon*. He naturally appears in *LIMC* under "Chimaira", but not independently of the monster, which in the early material is depicted by itself, or only with Pegasos; on this duo see "Chimaira" section II, nos. 103–113.

[147] If one assumes that the Solymoi were a Lykian theme, it is understandable why there are no extant Greek representations of Bellerophontes' fight with them.

As far as the Amazon motif is concerned, the most important feature is that the theme of Bellerophontes' quarrel with the Lykians is the predominant one in the Ploutarchan versions, and his fight with the Chimaira is the main element within it. The preceding analysis finds support in the fact that the Amazons are only mentioned once, as an afterthought, and clearly were not an integrated part of the narrative. Even the Solymoi, who could have been incorporated into this pattern, are not mentioned either. The incidental presence of the Amazons in only one of the four versions rules out a structural relation between the Amazons and the Lykian women. The Amazons remain an *alienum corpus* in the Bellerophontes stories: their presence in the literary tradition is sporadic. By comparison with the tales of Herakles, Achilles, Theseus and other heroes, where the literary and visual sources include the Amazonomachy as an essential contribution to their reputation, the exceptional character of Bellerophontes' Amazonomachy speaks volumes.

This analysis of the material indicates that the Amazonomachy was not a part of the current repertoire of myths dealing with the heroism of Bellerophontes. It remains an incidental item which can only be traced in the literary record, and which failed to make any impact outside this tradition. The dependence of the literary testimonia on the passage in the *Iliad* means that consideration of how the Amazonomachy was introduced into the accounts of Bellerophontes' heroic exploits cannot bypass the question of the composition of the *Iliad.* It would seem that Glaukos' speech in book VI represents the first attempt to combine two very different heroic types in a single narrative and to relate them to the theme of "Lykia". In that case, the Amazonomachy must be regarded as belonging to the latest stage in the composition of the *Iliad.*

When we turn to the *Theogony*, we find hardly any trace of the Attis type; there are no Lykian elements at all; and the genealogical elaboration is missing as well. Yet another difference between the *Theogony* and the *Iliad* lies in the presence of Pegasos—as main character—and the absence of the Amazons and the Solymoi, while Bellerophontes has apparently been assigned the function of monster slayer. The main reason for these differences lies in the variety of narrative traditions. There was undoubtedly some degree of interchange between these narrative currents.[148] The verbal resemblances in the portrayal of the Chimaira, particularly the use of the word [amaimaketos], point in the same direction. It seems most likely that the two compositions drew on a description of the Chimaira which they took from a common oral source, for the possibility of direct influence of the *Iliad* on the *Theogony* or vice versa is ruled out by the crucial differences between the two versions.

The evolution that can be traced in the visual material proceeds from the Chimaira, a monster which already existed in a different context, perhaps a catalogue. Scholars are agreed that the eventual iconography of the Chimaira was the result of a variety of themes from different locations.[149] This monster, whose iconography had not yet assumed a fixed form and which may have been connected with Poseidon Hippios and Pegasos in central Greece,[150] then became the target of Bellerophontes in his function as a slayer of monsters. This stage, the first traces of which can be found in the archaeological material in the first half of the seventh century, is already present in the work of Hesiodos and Homeros, but the elaboration of Bellerophontes' heroic role follows a drastically different course in the two versions.[151] Pegasos occupies a key position: the texts indicate that the winged horse was an ingredient in the theme of the son of Poseidon, which is only marginally present in the *Iliad.*

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[148] A similar weighing up of resemblances and differences in hexameter poetry has been discussed in connection with the *Iliad* and the *Aithiopis.* For correspondences between Hesiodic and Homeric diction see e.g. G.P. Edwards, *The Language of Hesiod in its Traditional Context*, Oxford 1971; Janko, *Homer, Hesiod and the Homeric Hymns.*

[149] Schmitt, "Bellerophon", pp. 341 and 346–347; *LIMC* s.v. "Chimaira", p. 257.

If the above hypothesis on the introduction of the Amazonomachy in the composition of the *Iliad* is accepted, we are bound to conclude that the poet of the *Iliad* has used the ancient formula for the Amazons twice in a new context: the Teichoscopy with the story dating from Priamos' youth, and the speech of Glaukos. The introduction of the Amazons to Bellerophontes' heroic exploits is certainly not as inconsistent with the main lines of the story as in the case of Priamos. All the same, the Amazons could not be introduced to the traditional myth of Bellerophontes without a degree of friction.[152] The wording of the text in which it is embedded may have prompted the reference to [Amazones antianeiras], which is perfectly in keeping with a catalogue.[153] Since *Iliad* VI, 186 is a part of Glaukos' story, the detail has a function within the whole: the poet has incorporated the theme in various ways, as can be seen from the numerical list of labours and from the symmetrical position of the Amazons and Artemis in the structure of the narrative. Nevertheless, the reference to the Amazons in the text of the *Iliad* is incidental to the myths of Bellerophontes.

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[150] This connection may be implied in the word [amaimaketos], which may refer to sacrifice, and which was also an epithet applied to the sea. See above, note 121.

[151] This conclusion is in close agreement with Burkert's dating of the *Iliad* and the place of Bellerophontes in that context, though with the modification on genealogical catalogues described above. All these considerations exclude a definitive editing of the *Iliad* in a Peisistratid redaction.

[152] In Goody's terminology, the Amazons do not belong to the essential "structures of recall" in either of the two versions of Bellerophontes' deeds, but they appear because the (re)constructive memory introduces notions at the level of diction which are semantically or phonetically related to the context, Goody, *The Interface*, pp. 176ff. In the Parry-Lord terminology, the Amazons do not belong to one of Bellerophontes patterns, but they are added by a mechanism which resembles the echo principle.

[153] See above, pp. 163–164.

The inclusion of the Amazons in the deeds of Bellerophontes can be explained by analogy with the case of Priamos. First, the fact that Phrygia and Lykia were both trouble spots in the first half of the seventh century may have induced the poet to locate the heroic deeds by Priamos and Bellerophontes in those areas. In the case of Bellerophontes, we can even see how the poet has elaborated the heroic labours, which traditionally started with the fight against the monster, to form a catalogue in which Pegasos has been eliminated and the theme of Bellerophontes' quarrel with the Lykians has come to occupy pride of place. He has added the Amazons to this list, even though they were not a part of the traditional material. Second—and more importantly—, the growing interest in the Amazons led the poet to make use of this motif when he was formulating his interpretation of Bellerophontes' labours in hexameters. The mention of the Amazons in *Iliad* VI, 186 is thus not incidental as regards the development of the Amazon motif: it is indicative of the dissemination of the Amazon motif throughout the archaic Greek world.

CHAPTER FIVE

HERAKLES AND THE SIXTH-CENTURY DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMAZON MOTIF

The archaic material: methodological considerations

> The ninth labour he enjoined on Herakles was to bring the girdle of Hippolyte. She was queen of the Amazons, who dwelt about the river Thermodon, a people great in war. For they cultivated the manly virtues, and if ever they gave birth to children through intercourse with the other sex, they reared the females; and they pinched off the right breasts, that they might not be trammelled by them in throwing the javelin, but they kept the left breasts, that they might suckle. Now Hippolyte had the girdle of Ares in token of her superiority to all the rest. Herakles was sent to fetch this girdle because Admete, daughter of Eurystheus, desired to get it. So taking with him a band of volunteer comrades in a single ship he set sail. (. . .) Having put in at the harbour of Themiskyra, he received a visit from Hippolyte who inquired why he was come and promised to give him the girdle. But Hera in the likeness of an Amazon went up and down the multitude saying that the strangers who had arrived were carrying off the queen. So the Amazons in arms charged on horseback down on the ship. But when Herakles saw them in arms, he suspected treachery, and killing Hippolyte stripped her of her girdle. And after fighting the rest he sailed away and touched at Troy.
>
> (Apollod. *Bibl.* II, v, 9).

This passage from Apollodoros' mythographic work offers a good impression of how Herakles' confrontation with the Amazons developed to become an extensive story in the course of time. This is undoubtedly the most popular version of Herakles' Amazon episode, but it has to be set aside completely if one attempts to reconstruct the archaic motif. There is only one element in the Apollodoros passage which is also present in the earliest representations of Herakles: the fight with the Amazons. All the other motifs have been gradually added to this scene of combat:

the introduction of the confrontation in a series of labours of Herakles; the fixing of this series as the Twelve Labours; the theft of the girdle; the location of Themiskyra on the Thermodon; the Amazonology; Hera's intervention.

The theft of the girdle is of particular importance among these changes. The first, extremely vague reference is the use of the name "Oiolykè" by the poet Ibykos in the sixth century. This name evoked associations with Amazons, but it is impossible to establish an unambiguous connection with Herakles and the girdle.[1] Ibykos' poetic career was situated in Western and Eastern Greece, so that any claims to familiarity with the motif in Attika, the source of most of the Heraklean material (in the form of vase paintings) are very implausible. The title of a play by the fifth-century comic poet from Western Greece Epicharmos was "Herakles after the girdle".[2] A fragment of Pindaros indicates that he too referred to Herakles' theft of the girdle: Peleus went with Herakles to Troy, helped him to get the Amazon's [zoostèr], and finally accompanied Iason on his way to bring Medeia from Kolchis.[3] On the basis of this material we may assume that it was not until the fifth century that this motif acquired any currency. The earliest reference to the girdle in extant Athenian literature is in the work of Euripides.[4] In fact, the motif of the girdle eventually came to replace Herakles' Amazonomachy to some extent. In the version of Apollodoros, the fight comes about by accident, while Apollonios of Rhodos describes how Herakles captured Melanippe, the daughter of the queen, by trickery and returned her unharmed to the Amazon queen in return for the girdle.[5]

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[1] *PMG*, ed. D.L. Page, Oxford 1972, Ibykos fr. 18.: [akoulouthoos tooi muthooi pezon ton Heraklea phèsin epi ton zoostèra tès Hippolutès apelthein.. polloi de logoi peri tou zoostèros eisin. tines men gar Hippolutès, alloi de Dèïlukès; Ibukos de idioos histooroon Oiolukès tès Briareoo thugatros phèsin].

[2] *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta in papyris reperta*, C. Austin, ed. Berlin/ New York 1973, Epicharmos fr. 82, line 6 "[epi ton zoostèra]"; cf. ibidem p. 54. See too *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, Vol. 1, 1. G. Kaibel, ed. Berlin 1899, FF. 76 and 77; on the career of Epicharmos as an author see the testimonia there, pp. 88–90.

[3] Pind. fr. 172. Pind. *Nem.* III, 63–69 describes Herakles' journey to the Amazons with Iolaos and Telamon, but it does not mention the girdle.

[4] Eur. *HF.* 408—417; the [zoostèr] of the [korè Areia] (= both daughter of Ares and martial young woman) which fastens her peplos. Eur. *Herakl.* 217: the [zoostèra poluktonon] (= the girdle which spreads death and corruption), which the speaker, Iolaos, has obtained together with Theseus—and add Herakles.

There is thus no (early) archaic story of Herakles' Amazonomachy. As we have already seen,[6] there are no extant texts which furnish his Amazonomachy with a narrative context. The fact that this motif actually existed at the time is proved by the archaeological material depicting Herakles engaged in fighting the Amazons. In addition, there are a few fragments of other Herakles stories and other kinds of testimonia, mainly of an archaeological nature, which provide information on the nature and development of Herakles' role as a hero. The first task in an examination of the motif of Herakles and the Amazons is therefore the identification of those representations which may have illustrated this theme.

The identification of a representation in the archaic material is usually an extremely complex procedure. We are dealing with artefacts from the ninth to the seventh centuries, most of which lack inscriptions which could lead to an identification of the scene portrayed. It is therefore theoretically impossible to determine on the basis of the artefact itself whether the scene represented is taken from everyday life or mythology,[7] or whether it illustrates a specific story which is well known from a particular version in a written source. The comparison of visual representations with texts can even lead to distortion. Some iconographers have attempted to determine the identity of representations using literary data which at first sight correspond to the representation in question. For instance, possible illustrations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were in the limelight for some time, so that representations of a battle scene or other scenes were regarded as particular moments from the Homeric epics.[8] More recent research, however, has questioned these identifications. Fittschen in particular has argued that they are often non-specific, generic representations of mythic episodes or figures.[9] It is possible that the representations illustrate specific themes rather than particular scenes attested in the literary sources. The most circumspect scholars do not situate the first representations which can be securely identified as illustrations of a Homeric scene earlier than the second half of the seventh century. Identification on the basis of texts from a much later period is even more hazardous.[10] This betrays a naive lack of attention to the chronology, unless myths are taken to remain intact in every detail for centuries. The fact that structural interpretations of myths also presuppose a basic immutability, though on different, theoretical grounds, has only served to make matters worse.

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[5] Ap. Rh. *Argon.* II, 966–969. Herakles exchanges Melanippe [apèmona] for the [zoostèra panaiolon].

[6] See p. 149ff.

[7] It is even questionable to what extent an essential distinction between these two types can be supposed at all. This ambiguity characterizes the representations as such: according to Fittschen, it is by no means always possible to determine whether a scene is taken to represent everyday life or an action with mythical characters. It also characterizes the experience of mythology, which played an important part in the interpretation and structuring of reality, cf. P. Veyne, *Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes? Essai sur l'imagination constituante*, Paris 1983. See also the lucid comments by R. Osborne, "Whose Image and Superscription Is This?", *Arion* 29, 1991, pp. 255–275, esp. pp. 261ff.

The iconographical and iconological approach offers a more secure point of departure. Besides the chronological sequence and a classification in kinds of artefact, the material can be arranged in terms of security of identification. Identification is based on the comparison of one representation with others which can be identified with a greater degree of certainty. For example, if a particular scene can be interpreted unambiguously as "Achilles kills Penthesileia" because of the presence of inscriptions, it is reasonable to apply the same identification to fully corresponding representations from more or the less the same period but which do not have inscriptions.[11] The problem is then whether the scene which lacks an inscription really does correspond iconographically to the model, or whether deviation from that model is sufficient to conclude that it belongs to a different type. One of the principles on which this method is based is the necessity for the observer to be able to make an unambiguous interpretation. Representations must speak as clearly as words—though how clearly *they* speak is a debatable issue. In spite of these ambiguities, which can be deliberately exploited, this assumption is a good guiding principle.

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[8] See e.g. Lorimer, *Homer and the Monuments*; K. Friis Johansen, *The Iliad in Early Greek Art*, Copenhagen 1967.

[9] Fittschen, *Untersuchungen*; cf. Snodgrass's comment that "a mythological interpretation which is established by Fittschen can be taken as established indeed", "Poet and Painter", p. 120. But see the next note.

[10] Even Fittschen indulges in this practice: Theseus and Bellerophontes, *Untersuchungen*, p. 152; the theft of the girdle, p. 177; Themiskyra, p. 177. Bothmer's commentary on the Castellani vase, *Amazons* p. 14, has already been mentioned (p. 149); and see below on this vase, pp. 377–378.

[11] Though see the critical remarks by F.T. van Straten, "Ikonografie van een mythe", *Lampas* 17, 1984, pp. 162–183.

Each visual representation is developed on the basis of a basic representation. For instance, Exekias' representation of the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia derives from the basic representation of a hero killing an Amazon, which in turn derives from the representation of a hero killing another hero. The basic representation thus undergoes transformations, which may evidence a new interpretation or a new use of the representation. If the production of visual material increases, the patterns circulate faster and more changes are introduced. This entails caution in dealing with an artefact which dates from long before the quantitatively most striking series of representations—a problem which plays an important part in the case of Herakles' Amazonomachy.

Finally, interpretation itself is a complicated matter. Once a representation has been securely identified, this does not mean to say that its cultural meaning does not change. One might start by inquiring how the basic representational forms and their original meaning arose. Fittschen's reply boils down to the argument that visual motifs, which were often derived from the Near East, were used to provide the figures of Greek mythology with a standard iconography. This point of view is very close to that of Burkert, who has discussed the adaptation of original Oriental motifs in Greek culture in a number of publications.[12] However, this does not necessarily imply that the representation retained its original meaning intact in the new, Greek context. In fact, this was usually not the case. At any rate, the identity of a visual motif is the result of a development, and the question of whether visual motifs from other cultures are involved in this process is a minor issue compared with the main point, viz. the creation of a culturally defined meaning for a specific figure or scene in an unambiguous representation. The case of Achilles and Penthesileia provides an example of such a developmental process. The iconography of Achilles supporting Penthesileia in the fray is rooted in epic narratives of their duel. However, as we have seen, the meaning of their combat changed so radically in the course of the lengthy period stretching from the (early) archaic to the Hellenistic period that the Greek hero and the Amazon now came to assume a meaning which ran counter to that in the epic. This example illustrates the general principle that the power of referral of an image can only rarely be deduced directly from the image itself.

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[12] For Burkert's interpretation of Bellerophontes, see the previous chapter. Exemplary of his approach is his contribution "Oriental and Greek Mythology" in Bremmer, *Interpretations*, esp. pp. 30–34.

In dealing with the archaic visual material, it will be necessary to discuss the arguments on identifications in detail because of its highly controversial character. These early artefacts already raise the question of the connection between Herakles' Amazonomachy and the Amazonomachy as a general theme. The identity of Herakles in the Amazonomachy is assured from the late sixth century (alabastron **[no. 3]**). The subsequent visual material is mainly to be found in Attic vase painting. The numbering of the relevant artefacts follows Bothmer's monograph *Amazons in Greek Art* because the extant corpus is fully discussed there (in contrast to *LIMC*), but different conclusions are drawn from Bothmer's descriptions. His study was intended as an iconographic arrangement of visual themes according to the principles of his tutor, Sir John Beazley. Probably without realizing it,[13] he based this arrangement on the Attic black-figure vase painting in which Herakles is unmistakably the main figure. As a result, his study of the Amazon motif up to the end of the classical period resembles a Herakles iconography with variations rather than an inquiry into the Amazonomachy as a visual theme. Moreover, his interpretations assume a connection between the visual material and the literary tradition which is no longer accepted today. Speaking generally, many opinions have been changed and accents shifted in iconographical research since the publication of *Amazons in Greek Art.*

The following chronological treatment of the material arranges it in four categories: the earliest material dating from before the end of the seventh century;[14] an early group of Attic black-figure work from ca. 575–550; black-figure work from after 550; and late archaic work including the parallel development of black-figure and red-figure styles before the eclipse of the former. Bothmer's preoccupation with black-figure work led him to describe the full development of many iconographical themes from 550 to the end of the sixth century. A fresh analysis by a specialist of the second black-figure group in particular would lead to more precise results. In what follows the patterns discerned in the two black-figure groups are presented in broad outline; detailed discussion is reserved only for those iconographical descriptions which require it. The focus of the present discussion is on wider developments: the visual material on Herakles' Amazonomachy and the presentation of new kinds of representations of the Amazons in the sixth century yield themes which throw a special light on the motif of the Amazons.

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[13] Bothmer's passion, to which he has dedicated his entire life, is Attic black-figure work (personal communication, John Boardman).

[14] One source is conspicuous by its absence during this period: the bronze shield-strap reliefs featuring the Labours of Herakles all depict the hero's

It is in the period commencing around 575 B.C. that we witness the sudden appearance of a large volume of Attic black-figure vases depicting the Heraklean Amazonomachy. The pattern of these scenes has already been mentioned, and the material will be treated in a separate discussion. However, it is worth summarizing a few main points here because these scenes are important for purposes of iconographical comparison. The black-figure work can be broken down into the following categories:

i. large-scale fight between Greeks and Amazons; Herakles is clearly recognizable as he fights in the central duel from left to right, with one arm outstretched to grip his opponent. Works in this category are often accompanied by inscriptions, especially naming Herakles, Telamon and other Greeks, and Amazons.

ii. small-scale fight of Herakles with Amazons; for example, Herakles with a comrade against three Amazons, or on his own in a duel. These small-scale scenes, especially the duel between Herakles and an Amazon, are regarded by Bothmer as excerpts from the large-scale Amazonomachy.[15] The duel appears on vases

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struggle with a monster—Lion, Hydra, Boar and Geryon—but not his Amazonomachy.

[15] Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 30ff. He considers that the limitation of the scope of the scene to a handful of combattants is partly determined by the smaller size of the vases in question, *Amazons*, p. 45, but the more recent concept of Herakles as a hero will also have contributed to these changes.

from the middle of the sixth century to the decline of black-figure vase painting.

iii. large-scale fight between Greeks and Amazons in which Herakles is absent. These are anonymous scenes of battle between two peoples, and no individuals are marked out by name or regular attributes.[16]

iv. the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia, discussed in Chapter III.

v. small-scale Amazonomachy, duel or trios, sometimes accompanied by horses, chariots and other attributes. These scenes can be regarded as excerpts from the third category, by analogy with the scenes in category ii.

vi. scenes of Amazons on their own. These appear in growing numbers from the middle of the sixth century and will be treated separately.

The earliest Amazons: problems of interpretation

[no. 1]. Votive shield, found in Tiryns; ca. 700 B.C.[17] (**[figs. 4a** and **4 b]**)

One side of this very fragmentary artefact contains a battle scene. On the left-hand side is a warrior dressed in a chiton, helmet and with a strap over his chest,[18] depicted in relatively large dimensions, who grasps his opponent by the crest of the helmet and raises a sword in a threatening gesture. The right-hand figure is wearing a long gown, though one leg is visible. This is a female garment, and two circles depicted somewhat below shoulder-level indicate breasts; the right-hand figure is thus female. She is wearing a helmet and raises a spear with her right arm, while she uses her left arm to ward off the arm grasping her helmet. This armed female figure is an Amazon. In view of the posture of her body, her right leg seems to be bent. To her right stands another female figure (Amazon), who is smaller. To the left of the male warrior is another man, who is also smaller. A third figure is lying on the ground; only a piece of a leg and a fragment of a chiton are visible. The short chiton indicates that this figure is a Greek too.[19] In the upper right-hand corner is a bird with a fish in its beak. Whether this animal is a decorative addition like the angular border decorations, or should be attributed a specific significance, is disputed.[20] The other side of the shield depicts a horse-man engaged in hunting.[21] The only agreement is on the style (late Geometric) and on the date: ca. 700 B.C. or slightly later.

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[16] Bothmer labels these Amazonomachies variously as the battle at Troy or as the Heraklean Amazonomachy without Herakles. This remarkable identification is discussed below, pp. 388–389.

[17] B, I, 1; Fittschen, SB 83.

[18] It is unclear what this strap is meant to be. I. Diakonoff, to whom I am indebted for invaluable comments on this shield as well as on the Samos shield **no. 2**, pointed out that the "strap" is clasped with an ornament resembling a feline head. Her forthcoming research on this object will further illuminate the scene depicted on this shield.

[no. 2]. Votive shield, found in the Temple of Hera on Samos; ca. 700 B.C.[22] **[fig. 6]**

This shield is in an even worse state than **[no. 1]**. There is only one fragment, and a large part of the discussion concerns possible supplements to the visible remains. Its pictorial style strongly resembles the Tiryns shield and it shows the upper half of the body of a warrior, facing right. The figure is wearing a tall helmet and holds an unidentifiable object (perhaps a spear) in the right hand. A drape (?) decorated with circles hangs from the left-hand side of the body, which runs into a double line to the upper part of the body. Two figures can be seen at breast level: the right one is an incised circle (at the outer edge of a plane indicating or covering the body), the left one is irregular in shape and does not seem to be incised in the same way. Hampe, though, believed that they were both incised, circular figures and hence the breasts of a woman, resembling the breasts of the Amazon in **[no. 1]**.[23] As a result, this fragment has been considered one of the possible early representations of an Amazon, although in the last analysis Bothmer prefers not to pin down the identity precisely.[24] Hampe also considered that the shield was large enough for its decorative field to have included an opponent.[25] In that case, the scene in question could be an Amazonomachy. Eilmann and Fittschen, on the other hand, consider the shield to be too small to accommodate two figures, and the latter regards Athena as a more likely possibility.[26] This question of size and of an opponent is crucial. If there is only room for a single figure, the identification of that figure as an Amazon is extremely unlikely, since an Amazon on her own would be unique for the period before ca. 570. Equally crucial is the interpretation of the figures as two circles or one circle and something else. The determination of the gender of the warrior depends on the interpretation of these figures. If they are circles and hence breasts, it is a female warrior; otherwise, it is a male. If Fittschen's reconstruction of the shield is correct, allowing room for a single figure, the most likely identity for the figure is a male hero or a martial goddess; the latter would also be more in accordance with the site where it was discovered.[27]

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[19] The question whether the lying figure is to be identified as a Greek or an Amazon hardly affects the identification of the scene as a whole, since Amazonomachies feature both Greeks and Amazons in this position; in this respect the discussion between Fittschen and Schefold is fruitless, Fittschen *Untersuchungen*, p. 177.

[20] The bird has been identified as a vulture. In that case, the scene would be the battle near Themiskyra, see Fittschen, *Untersuchungen*, p. 177. It is hard to take arguments of this kind seriously; Bothmer, at any rate, would agree, *Amazons*, pp. 1–2.

[21] This figure is an isolated emblem without any narrative context. Fittschen R 17; p. 96 prefers the designation horse-man to Kentauros.

[22] B, I, 2; R. Eilmann, "Frühe Griechische Keramik im Samischen Heraion", *AM* 58, 1933, pp. 46–146, illustrated on p. 120, ill. 66 and Beilage XXXVII, no. 1; R. Hampe, "Korfugiebel und frühe Perseusbilder", *AM* 60–61, 1935–1936, pp. 269–300, illustrated on p. 284, ill. 7.

Considering the photograph in Eilmann's publication, however, I offer the following observations. As already indicated, the left figure at breast level seems to be different from the right one; the latter is a circular incision, but the former is not. Second, the space between the spotted "drape" and the body of the warrior shows the undecorated surface of the shield. Here a distance seems to be indicated between the body and the "drape". If the left figure at breast level is connected with this garment, it might be a clasp. The incised circle seems to be part of the body cover. Concerning the size of the shield, apparently the fragment is too small or too irregular to allow for an unequivocal reconstruction of its precise dimensions. A try-out based on the photograph indicated the smaller size preferred by Eilmann and Fittschen, approx. 15–16 cm. in diameter. In this view, the shield could not contain a second figure. Further research on the object itself is required, and any conclusions drawn at this stage must be regarded as provisional.

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[23] Hampe, "Korfugiebel" p. 285.

[24] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 3.

[25] Hampe, "Korfugiebel", pp. 284ff. His reconstruction of the shield is based on this assumption in leaving room on the right-hand side for an opponent or target, ill. 7.

[26] Eilmann, "Frühe Griechische Keramik", pp. 120ff. and his reconstruction in ill. 66; Fittschen, *Untersuchungen*, p. 130, n. 652 c.

[27] W. Pötscher, *Hera. Eine Strukturanalyse im Vergleich mit Athena*, Darmstadt 1987, describes the resemblance between Hera and Athena in their involvement with heroes, especially Herakles, pp. 141–142. In this connection he discusses the resemblance between [Hèra] and [hèroos]. Both the myth and ritual of the Samian cult of Hera focused on marriage, and cannot simply be related to heroes pp. 125ff. and 143.

[no. 3] Early Korinthian alabastron; end 7th century. Inscriptions: Andromeda, Alkinoa, Areximacha (?), Herakles, Iolaos, Pasimelon.[28] **[fig. 7]**

This is a battle scene in which three Greeks in hoplite dress approach from the right, while the Amazons are drawn up on the left. Andromeda and Alkinoa both have a shield and spear, "Areximacha" has a bow, and a few arrows can be seen among the combatants. The Amazons are wearing long dresses with a slit. Bothmer identifies the head-gear of the female archer as a Phrygian cap, but the item in question is unclear. Herakles in hoplite dress without his lion skin or club would be unrecognizable without the inscription. The two groups are drawn up in a row, without any of the suggestion of depth that we find on the Chigi vase. The original has been lost, but to my knowledge no scholar has found reason to doubt the reliability of the copy or the authenticity of the original.[29]

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[28] First read as Menoitas, B I, 4; Fittschen SB 86; A. de Ridder, "Une représentation d'Amazones sur un vase corinthien", *RUM* 2, 1896, pp. 385–392; C. Fredrick, "Imbros", *AM* 33, 1908, pp. 81–112, ill. 32; H. Payne, *Necrocorinthia. A Study of Corinthian Art in the Archaic Period*, Maryland 1971; alabastron no. 366, "by far the earliest version of the subject", p. 130, and on the inscriptions p. 161; Brommer, *Herakles*, ill. 36. See further on this vase Amyx, *Corinthian Vase-painting of the Archaic Period*, vol. II, p. 557. Amyx is not convinced by Beazley's reading of the name Areximacha. He engages in a full discussion of the dating of Korinthian production and reaches conclusions which are virtually the same as those of Payne, *Necrocorinthia*, see Ch. 3; he dates early Korinthian to ca. 620/615—595/590 B.C. In view of his adhesion to Payne, I follow the dating of this alabastron to the end of the seventh century.

[29] Brommer, *Herakles*, pp. 35–36; ill. 36; likewise Fittschen, SB 86, and Amyx, *Corinthian Vase-painting*, p. 557, who certainly takes the possibility of

The scene on the alabastron is different from the extremely regular pattern of the Amazonomachies of Herakles which is to be found in black-figure vase painting. In the latter iconography, Herakles, often accompanied by companions, is always on the left-hand side, while the Amazons operate on the right. The central duel between Herakles and the Amazon whom we can identify as the Amazon queen indicates the final result of the heavy combat: as Herakles strikes her down she bends at the knees, the body usually averted as if in an attempt to escape.[30] (cf. **fig. 9**) The Tiryns shield **[no. 1]** conforms to the same pattern. The alabastron, however, differs from the rest of the archaeological material in that the left-hand and right-hand positions have been inverted; the central duel is absent; and the outcome of the battle is not represented. Since this is the only extant Korinthian vase depicting an Amazonomachy, the explanation for this unusual representation must be sought in Korinthian production, probably under the influence of a current local story.[31]

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forgeries seriously. Bothmer *Amazons*, p. 4 refers to the "unique and puzzling position" of this alabastron. He has not found any literary pendants for the Amazon names and tries to fill in the gap by relying on the exotic tale preserved in Diodoros (III, 52–55). In other respects too he is uneasy about the low level of correspondence between this item and the extant texts, Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 4. He claims that there is no literary pendant for Iolaos' participation in the journey to Themiskyra either, but this is not entirely correct, for Pind. *Nem.* III, 63–69 relates that both Telamon and Iolaos were engaged in the sacking of Laomedon's city and in the confrontation with the Amazons. It is inconceivable in this context that they should not be understood to be companions of Herakles. The text of the ode links the two episodes with the word [kai], while [pote] is only a vague indication that the activities took place at some time in the past. The journey to the Amazons and the conflict with the Trojan king are associated in other sources too, as can be seen from the citation from Apollodoros. Apparently these adventures are considered as events on a single route, linked together by their connection with the place where the Amazons live—in Themiskyra, or near Troy. Naturally enough, the scholiasts tried to bring more precision to bear on the vagueness of Pindaros' text. It is remarked that [chronooi de tini], "at some time", Telamon and Herakles journeyed to the martial Amazons to fetch the girdle of Hippolyte; Schol. Pind. *Nem.* 64 a, ed. Drachmann. The expedition is also taken to have included Peleus and, following Hellanikos of Lesbos (5th century B.C.), the entire crew of the Argo, ibidem 64 b.

[30] Cf. also Penthesileia **[no. 1]**.

[31] Amyx, *Corinthian Vase-Painting*, pp. 375ff. For the uneven representation of the Labours of Herakles in Korinthian vase painting, *ibid.* p. 628. The most popular theme is that of Herakles and the Lernean Hydra, in which Herakles is often assisted by Iolaos. Next in popularity come the battle or confrontations with Kentaurs.

Discussion of the iconography of the Amazonomachy of Herakles—the tracing of formal affinities in the patterns or attributes depicted on the extant representations—has to be set against the background of Attic black-figure vase painting, because that is the only source which contains enough identified representations for us to speak of a series. In the period up to the middle of the sixth century, apart from five exceptional items in the preceding decennia, the Amazons are solely portrayed as participants in the Amazonomachy. Whether the theme is the Heraklean or the Trojan Amazonomachy, the representation of Amazons is based on a scene of combat. Not until the second half of the sixth century do we find a significant number of representations of Amazons on their own, and even then they still appear in scenes connected with battle, for they are depicted, like their Greek opponents, in the act of preparing for combat or leave-taking. The Amazonomachy is thus the fixed image of the Amazons in virtually the entire archaeological record up to the middle of the sixth century.

The alabastron **[no. 3]** is the first securely identifiable artefact depicting the Amazonomachy of Herakles, though without the inscription there is no attribute which would enable us to establish his identity. The lion skin and club which serve as identifying marks in the sixth-century material were apparently first attributed to the hero in the epic poem *Herakleia* by Peisandros of Kameiros.[32] The claims of the Rhodian aristocracy to be descended from Herakles must have made the island of Rhodos a particularly fertile breeding ground for stories about Herakles.[33] Peisandros is dated to shortly before the emergence of that black-figure work which contains these attributes, viz. in the late seventh or early sixth century,[34] but this is completely speculative: the only firm evidence is the name of Peisandros, on the one hand, and the presence of these attributes in the sixth-century visual record, on the other. As far as the alabastron is concerned, at any rate, the identity of the hero is dependent on the inscription.

This brings us to the more general problem raised by Fittschen:[35]

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[32] Peisandros, see *EGF* ed. Davies, pp. 129–135; the club F 1, cf. T 1.

[33] Strabon, XV, 688; cf. e.g. Burn, *Lyric Age*, p. 66.

[34] See Burn, *Lyric Age*, p. 66; *Kleine Pauly*, s.v. Peisandros (8).

[35] "Welche Hilfsmittel hat ein Künstler, eine dämonische Figur der Sage, *deren Aussehen die Sage nicht mitteilte*, im Bild zu Gestalten?" Fittschen, *Untersuchungen*, p. 128; emphasis added.

how were artists to depict a figure whose external appearance was not mentioned in the narrative tradition? Identity can be conferred by distinguishing one person from another: by means of clothing, attitude, attributes, inscriptions. Affinity with other figures is often an element too: this figure is a Greek hero too, this one is divine too, this one is a horse-man too, this one is a foreigner too. Fittschen's question applies to many mythical figures, such as the Gorgon and the Kentaurs, and it is relevant to the Amazons as well. How were the Amazons to be defined within a visual tradition? The primary characteristics are that they are martial females (not males); and that they fight (instead of engaging in feminine pursuits).

How can an artist indicate that the warriors are women? In black-figure vase painting women are represented with white pigmentation, and this applies to the Amazons as well, but this is the only bodily characteristic illustrated in the representations. However, this white colour is not used on the votive shields. It need not be, either, since on the Tiryns shield the Amazon of the central duel is indicated as a woman by her breasts. This feature is in harmony with Geometric representations of women in general; likewise, the long dresses with a slit are common female garb from the Geometric period on.[36] On **[no. 1]** all Amazons are identifiable as women through this clothing. This dress was also the usual clothing of the Gorgons until the period of the alabastron; it was replaced at the end of the seventh century by a short chiton.[37] The Amazons are wearing this long dress on the Tiryns shield **[no. 1]** and on the alabastron **[no. 3]**, and the leg revealed by the slit suggests movement. The male warriors wear a short chiton.

Martial prowess and femininity, however, are not enough. After all, the goddess Athena satisfies both criteria as well, but she is not an Amazon. Athena is immediately distinguishable from an

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[36] For the Geometric influence on no. 1, see Bothmer, *Amazons*, p.1. He also detects many signs of proto-Attic influence.

[37] The construction of the image of the Gorgon took place in stages. It consisted of two elements: the head with the open mouth, see Th. Phillies Howe, "The Origin and Function of the Gorgon-Head", *AJA* 58, 1954, pp. 209–221; Th. Feldman, "Gorgo and the Origins of Fear", *Arion* 4, 1965, pp. 484–494; and the body, which was borrowed from that of Artemis Potnia Thèroon, and on one occasion even from that of the Kentaurs; Feldman, "Gorgo", and Fittschen, *Untersuchungen*, p. 128.

Amazon in a battle scene because the goddess is invincible.[38] That makes the question of the available space on the shield from the temple of Hera **[no. 2]** relevant under certain conditions. If both contours are identified as circles, and if the circles are interpreted as breasts, indicating that this figure is a *female* figure with a helmet, and if it occupied the entire surface of the shield, we could be almost certain that the figure was that of a martial goddess, unless it displayed any features which would contradict such an identification. If the shield included a second figure, an opponent, then the female warrior must be portrayed as a loser if she is to be identified as an Amazon. As yet, the analysis of the extant fragment is not satisfactory enough to determine whether this is the case.[39]

However, the Amazons on the alabastron **[no. 3]** are not losers in the fight either. In fact, there is no duel taking place: the scene is probably the confrontation between two parties which precedes the more serious combat. This is another unique feature of this representation. All the same, there are elements which justify our inclusion of the alabastron in the present series: the Amazonomachy of Herakles is a *group enterprise* (as in **[no. 1]** and in the black-figure vases), and the representation includes inscriptions (like the black-figure work). If the alabastron were to be compared with the black-figure work without taking the inscriptions into account, a Trojan Amazonomachy would certainly come to mind. But does the Tiryns shield depict the Amazonomachy of Herakles?

[No. 1] is controversial in a number of different ways. Not only is it the earliest Amazonomachy, occupying an isolated position in the chronological scheme (if we leave **[no. 2]** out of account); it is also one of the very earliest mythological representations in Greek art. As a result, there is a danger that this artefact may be given a much more important role in attempts at reconstruction than its isolated position justifies. This is also the case if one attempts to trace the development of the Amazon motif in the early archaic period using this votive shield as the main piece of evidence: identifications of the figure as "Herakles" or as "Achilles" would yield completely different results. A discrepancy of this kind on the basis of a single artefact is unacceptable. Despite the need for caution, then, it is still worth examining the question of the identification of this figure in more detail.

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[38] Athena also plays an active part as a warrior in the prevailing stories: in the Trojan material her main opponent is Ares, *Il.* V, 840ff.; XXI, 391ff. In the visual material her main role is as a combatant in the Gigantomachy, a theme which was closely connected with the city of Athens. *LIMC*, "Athena", nos. 381—404; nos. 381–388 are archaic; cf. also the commentary on Athena, pp. 1023–1024.

[39] Hampe and Bothmer have both preferred the possibility of two incised circles intended to represent breasts. Comparison of **nos. 1** and **2**, however, reveals more correspondences between the warrior on **no. 2** and the left-hand figure on **no. 1** than between the former and the Amazon on **no. 1**. The possibility cannot be excluded that the figure on **no. 2** is a male figure.

There is a consensus that one side of the Tiryns shield depicts an Amazonomachy, while the other side is usually referred to as a hunting Kentauros. The debate has focused on the Amazonomachy: does it represent Achilles and Penthesileia, or Herakles and the Amazons?[40] If the "Kentauros" is included in the identification, it is usually taken to support whichever view has already been taken on the Amazonomachy.

The following arguments give some idea of the form the discussion has taken. The male warrior without a shield is Herakles, but the Amazon queen has no shield either.[41] The hero is wearing a helmet, but that would be appropriate for both Achilles and Herakles.[42] Fittschen sees little difference between the girdle of the hero and that of the Amazon: this might be seen as an argument in favour of an identification as Achilles, he believes.[43] Fittschen also associates the dead Greek in the foreground with Troy, where more dead fell than at Themiskyra.[44] Bothmer identifies the Kentauros as Cheiron, the tutor of Achilles, which would indicate an identification as Achilles.[45] DuBois, who is not concerned with any special identity for this Amazonomachy, sees the shield as the first sign of a phenomenon which she considers to be an essential feature in the fifth century in Athens: the combination of the Amazonomachy with the Kentauromachy. Both kinds of battles, she claims, were intended to contrast Greek identity to an undesirable alternative: women or animals.[46]

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[40] Brommer provides a survey of the debate with bibliographical references. The Herakles camp includes Kraiker, Kunze, Picard, and Schefold; the Achilles camp includes Webster, Hampe, and Fittschen; Brommer, *Herakles*, "Nachträge". Brommer himself opts for Herakles, p. 35. The Achilles camp can be enlarged to include J.N. Coldstream, *Geometric Greece*, London 1977, p. 355, and *LIMC*, "Achilleus" no. 719.

[41] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 1.

[42] Ibidem.

[43] Fittschen, *Untersuchungen*, p. 177.

[44] Ibidem.

[45] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 1. Bothmer is somewhat reticent on the identity of no. 1. In *Amazons* pp. 1–2 he counters the arguments advanced by Lorimer, *Homer and the Monuments*, pp. 170–171, but he retains her naming of the Amazon as Penthesileia; his reference to Cheiron points in the same direction.

The complete arbitrariness of these arguments is striking. Bothmer does not explain why Herakles might be supposed to be carrying or not to be carrying a shield. He does have one on the alabastron **[no. 3]**, as does the Amazon, though he does not usually have one in scenes on black-figure vase painting. Yet one of the few stories of Herakles from the archaic period deals precisely with—his shield. As long as Herakles does not wear a lion skin over his head, there is no reason why he should not wear a helmet; an argument of this kind depends entirely on the comparison of each representation with others. Fittschen's argument about the girdle antedates this motif and the location in Themiskyra by about two centuries.[47] Nor does the contemporary visual material bear witness to a connection between Achilles and the Kentauros Cheiron, for the first alleged depictions of Achilles are of his death, showing how the dead body of the hero is dragged from the battle field.[48] The Homeric epics do not suggest that Cheiron was Achilles' tutor either. This role is fulfilled by Phoinix (*Il.* IX, 430–495) and by his mother Thetis, not by the Kentauros.[49] The first representation of Thetis in this role dates from the seventh century,[50] and is thus chronologically closer to the Tiryns shield. Kemp-Lindemann sees the hunting Kentauros on the Tiryns shield as an example of this theme, which became so popular during this period.[51]

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[46] DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons*, pp. 53–54. She has no difficulties with the chronological discrepancy nor with the question of principle regarding the possible relation of the two sides of the shield to one another. Incidentally, **no. 1** is not a representation of a Kentauromachy, but of a hunting horse-man.

[47] Brommer is probably correct in regarding the testimonia of Pindaros and Epicharmos alone as sufficient evidence for the existence of the girdle motif in the fifth century; Brommer, *Herakles*, p. 35. Boardman adopts the same position, with a tentative reference to Ibykos, "Herakles, Theseus and Amazons", p. 6.

[48] See Kemp-Lindemann, *Darstellungen*, pp. 222–223, and Coldstream, *Geometric Greece*, fig. 75d; cf. *LIMC* "Achilleus", nos. 860–865. The oldest item in this series is no. 865, a ceramic object with embossed reliefs, dated ca. 700. The figure of Achilles on these representations is naked except for a helmet. It remains questionable whether this figure is Achilles, or whether we are here confronted with a generic epic representation of the dragging of the corpse, which should not be related to a specific scene involving Aias and Achilles. On the representations of the dragging of the corpse and the role of the woman (mother) in Attic vase painting, cf. Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier*, Ch. IV.

As can be seen from this discussion, the crucial problem is that of deciding which information is relevant. What value is to be attached to iconographical data, written sources, and the circumstances of the production and discovery of the artefacts in question?

To take the last point first, the eighth century has been labelled the "heroic Renaissance" for a number of reasons. Cults of epic heroes were initiated or intensified, so-called "heroic burials" took place in this period, and visual motifs which display at least a generic affinity with the Trojan epic are clearly attested.[52] An important stimulus behind this heroic Renaissance has been sought in the needs of a new ruling group, the aristocracy of Central and Southern Greece, to reinforce its claims by establishing a direct link with the past.[53] Starr refers to this group as a meritocracy which wanted to embed itself in a mythical past in order to become an aristocracy.[54] A reaction to the acceleration in the population growth and urban development may have played a part as well.[55]

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[49] Cheiron appears four times in the *Iliad*, twice as a tutor in the art of healing. He gave medicines to Asklepios, with which the latter's son Machaon was able to heal the wounded Menelaos, IV, 218–219. In XI, 829–832 he has provided Achilles with medicine so that the latter can follow Patroklos' advice in healing Eurypylos, who has been hit by an arrow. Cheiron has given Peleus a lance (XVI 143–144 and XIX, 390–391, identical formulae). In all these cases Cheiron is presented as someone with knowledge of the force of nature, represented in the medicine and in the special wood of the lance. He has transformed these gifts from natural to cultural elements. This role as an intermediary between nature and humankind matches his quality as a Kentauros. There are no traces in these passages of a special role for Cheiron as the tutor of Achilles. Such a role is to be found, for example, in the *Argonautika* of Apollonios of Rhodos, where Achilles is entirely in the care of Cheiron and his wife as a baby and is displayed to his father Peleus as the latter takes his leave; I, 553–558. On the other hand, passages connected with Cheiron's skill more or less recur in Quintus Smyrnaeus' version of the Penthesileia story: Achilles' lance, which pierces Penthesileia, is the very same weapon which Cheiron had fabricated (*Posthom.* I, 593). On the theme of Achilles' spear see R. Stoll Shannon III, *The Arms of Achilles and Homeric Compositional Technique*, Leiden 1975, esp. Ch. III.

[50] Fittschen, SB 12; p. 115.

[51] Kemp-Lindemann, *Darstellungen*, pp. 191–192; cf. Fittschen, R 17.

[52] Coldstream, *Geometric Greece*, Ch. 14; A. Snodgrass, *Archaic Greece. The Age of Experiment*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1980, pp. 38–39 and 68ff.; Hägg, *The Greek Renaissance.*

[53] R. Hägg, "Burial Customs and Social Differentiation in Eighth Century Argos", in Hägg, *Renaissance*, pp. 27–31.

It is debatable whether the diffusion of the Ionian epic should be seen as a cause or a result of this tendency.[56] The precise significance of the Homeric epics in this connection, when set against the many-sided development of this poetry, is a moot point.[57] At any rate, it is certain that this heroic cult concerned the "Homeric" heroes, i.e. the main protagonists of the Trojan epic, and not Herakles; the presence of the latter went without saying. It is also evident that these cults were the commonest in Messenia and the Argolid. Agamemnon and Menelaos, the former rulers in this territory, were particularly popular as the object of cults in their honour.[58] The walled city of Tiryns, which is also closely connected with Herakles, plays an important part in the *Iliad.* The votive shield that was found in Tiryns **[no. 1]** should be seen against the background of such a cultic setting. Indeed, Coldstream sets it in this heroic context, which leads him to identify the figures as Achilles and Penthesileia.[59] However, he does not support this identification with any iconographical arguments. Can arguments be drawn from the patterns on this votive shield? The number of combatants is not a reliable criterion, and the striking dimensions of the Greek and the larger figure of the Amazon in the middle by comparison with their allies can be interpreted in different ways. If the two combatants are engaged in a duel, with the smaller figures occupying the role of spectators,[60] this would favour an identification as Achilles and Penthesileia. On the other hand, if it is a scene of group combat, the smaller dimensions of some of the figures may be attributed to the shape of the shield and possibly to their secondary position *vis-à-vis* the central duel. In this case, the scene could be identified as the Amazonomachy of Herakles. If the Tiryns shield is inserted into an iconographical series including later material relating to Herakles' Amazonomachy, with the pattern of the duel serving as the connecting link, then we find elements which are unmistakably a part of the iconography of Herakles: a position on the left, with outstretched left arm clutching an Amazon—usually by the helmet crest, but sometimes by the shoulder or neck, with minor variations—and usually with a raised weapon—a sword or club—in the right arm.[61] This iconographical scheme becomes extremely common in black-figure vases from our first group, dating from ca. 575 B.C. On the basis of these iconographical arguments, the scene on the Tiryns shield must be the Amazonomachy of Herakles; Achilles and Penthesileia are ruled out.

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[54] Starr, *Origins*, pp. 304–305. Cf. also the conclusions in Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, pp. 629ff., on the aristocracy of the North-Eastern part of the Greek mainland some time later. Reinterpretation of its own identity can also be seen in the use of the epic "Argos" and "Argive" by the eighth-century city of Argos in a bid at enhancing its prestige, according to Drews, "Argos", pp. 134–135.

[55] Snodgrass, *Archaic Greece*, Ch. 1. In the discussion in *The Greek Renaissance*, p. 210, Kopff considered a restored interest in a region's own heritage as a reaction to oriental influence, but this is not very convincing in view of the continued interest in oriental motifs.

[56] S. Hiller, "Possible Historical Reasons for the Rediscovery of the Mycenaean Past in the Age of Homer", in Hägg, *Renaissance*, pp. 9–14, regards Homeric epic, which he dates in the second half of the eighth century, as a stimulating factor, but he assumes that the epic tradition of the mainland also contributed to the heroic Renaissance. The first signs of the "heroic Renaissance" antedate the conventional dating of Homer.

[57] Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans*, offers the most far-reaching interpretation of the correspondence between epic, the "Renaissance" and the heroic cults. He claims that the structure of the epic, viz. the *Iliad*, was supported by the epic hero cults, especially that of Achilles.

[58] "[. . .] the deposits are especially common in the Dorian lands of Messenia and the Argolid, where the ruling class could claim descent of Heracles, but no other ties of kinship with the departed heroes." Coldstream, *Geometric Greece*, p. 347.

[59] Coldstream, *Geometric Greece*, p. 355.

However, the problem referred to at the beginning of this chapter crops up at this point. Can we assume a plausible connection between the Attic vase painting[62] and this unusual Argive votive shield dating from more than a century earlier, without any tradition linking the two elements together? Are there solid points by which once can anchor such a specific interpretation as Herakles?

The answer is negative. Even though it helps to bridge the gap in time, the alabastron **[no. 3]** does not display any iconographical affinity. It is better to approach the Tiryns shield from Fittschen's angle, taking into account the preoccupations of the period in which the artefact was created.

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[60] Cf. e.g. the "Ainia" relief, Penthesileia no. 2, where an Amazon is lying in the foreground.

[61] See above, p. 355.

[62] On the Attic character of this work, see below, p. 382.

We can begin our new interpretation of the Tiryns shield by noting that the gesture of clutching at the helmet crest, which was later to become a specific gesture of Herakles in the later iconographical tradition of the Amazonomachy, also occurs a few times in descriptions of duels in the *Iliad.* Although epic fighting is usually done with spears, a duel at close quarters with the sword sometimes ensues after spears have been cast. To grasp one's opponent by the crest of the helmet guarantees victory.[63]

This gesture is also attested on late Geometric vases. The conclusions which G. Ahlberg has drawn from an analysis of this material are particularly relevant here.[64] She notes that the battle scenes on the vases do not reflect contemporary practice, but display an adaptation of Minoan-Mykenaian material, such as the so-called Boiotian shield,[65] and of Near Eastern representations.[66] The latter also applies to the types and tactics of battle, particularly the duel. Ahlberg states:

> In all close combats [except one] the one combattant—in all instances the left-hand one—is [. . .] clearly portrayed as superior and in the act of slaying the inferior adversary. [. . .] the attacking warrior is gripping the opponent by the helmet crest while wielding his sword for a blow. The proportionally frequent occurrence of this attitude allows us, even in the light of the very limited material, to consider the attitude as an iconographic formula, [. . .] used in different schemes of combat.[67]

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[63] In the duel between Paris and Menelaos, the latter draws his sword (*Il.* III, 361) and seizes Paris by the helmet crest. This would have secured him a victory had not Aphrodite broken the chin-strap and left Menelaos with the empty helmet in his hand (III, 369–376). The same action gives Hektor immediate mastery over Patroklos (XVI, 762).

[64] G. Ahlberg, *Fighting on Land and Sea in Greek Geometric Art,* Stockholm 1971. I am extremely grateful to H.W. Singor for pointing out this material to me.

[65] Ahlberg, *Fighting on Land and Sea,* pp. 54 and 59ff. See too A.M. Snodgrass, *Early Greek Armour and Weapons from the end of the Bronze Age to 600 B.C.,* Edinburgh 1964, pp. 58–61 for this type of shield, and passim for all of the armour and weapons.

[66] Ahlberg, *Fighting on Land and Sea,* Ch. V.

[67] Ahlberg, *Fighting,* p.77.

The gesture in question is known from Minoan-Mykenaian iconography (cf. **fig. 5**), and from Assyrian representations of duels.[68] Ahlberg demonstrates under what circumstances the oriental examples could have been taken over by Greek artists, and refers specifically in this connection to a pattern of the same duel in which the opponent falls to the ground.[69] Moreover, the position of the combatant who has fallen to the ground in these representations and on the Tiryns shield is important too, and the oriental material provides significant parallels for this as well.[70]

Interpretation of the Tiryns shield along these lines leads to somewhat different conclusions from those referred to above. While accepting Coldstream's view that the shield should be set within the context of the heroic "Renaissance" and the influence of epic, it is necessary to add these iconographical and iconological data. The course of development of the pattern of the duel is an absolute precondition for an understanding of the Tiryns shield. Ahlberg's findings, which match those of Fittschen and Burkert, confirm that it is better to understand the representations from this period as deriving in the most part from the East. Ahlberg's description of this type of representation as an "iconographic formula" is particularly apt because it underlines the convergence between the literary and visual traditions. A visual or literary expression is relatively autonomous, and while it may be used in a new context, it retains elements of its prior meaning. The pattern of the duel acquired a function of its own in late Geometric funerary art, and once again on the votive shield. As we shall see, the most specific change concerns the narrative framework in which the motif was applied.

The analysis so far has shown that, if we combine the evidence of the epic narratives of Troy and the contemporary visual representations, the pattern on the Tiryns shield can be characterized as the decisive moment in the course of a heroic duel. It is a frequent, structural ingredient in descriptions of heroic battle, not necessarily a *specific* scene which can be traced in the literature. Since this is a period of generic motifs, it is unlikely that these representations are intended to illustrate the final version of the *Iliad*, let alone any of the other epics known from the final form of its text. There are therefore insufficient grounds for identifying the figures as Achilles and Penthesileia. Moreover, the shield is close enough to the bronze shield-straps in location (Argos) and date (ca. 700 B.C. and late seventh century) for the iconographical differences in the relevant patterns to be significant. There are equally insufficient grounds for an identification as Herakles. The gesture of grasping the crest of the helmet is a feature *par excellence* of epic battle scenes and is not relevant in Herakles' battles with monsters. The late Geometric background to this gesture confirms that the Amazonomachy of **[no. 1]** is a fight between humans (kings, heroes) and thus has associations with epic narrative. In short, it is preferable to refer to the representation as an "Amazonomachy" as such, without having specific opponents in mind.

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[68] Ahlberg, *Fighting*, p. 78, with list of examples.
[69] Ahlberg, *Fighting*, pp. 80ff.
[70] Ahlberg, *Fighting*, pp. 94ff.

The epic narrative character of the representation calls for a few further remarks. Fittschen distinguishes between emblematic, decorative representations of certain figures, on the one hand, and representations which assume a narrative context, on the other. He regards this distinction as essential for the interpretation of mythical figures, and in particular he applies it to the representations of those figures whom he refers to emblematically as horse-men and in a narrative context as Kentaurs, an identification which has already cropped up in connection with the horse-man on the reverse of the Tiryns shield.[71] Following Fittschen and others, especially N. Himmelmann-Wildschütz,[72] Snodgrass has made some important observations on this question.[73] Snodgrass distinguishes different ways in which archaic artists, especially black-figure artists, dealt with the narrative element in their illustrations. He deals with one particular aspect in more detail: the synoptic illustration which consists of a representation implying a certain passage of time. One of the resources to this end is the suggestion of movement, another is the presence of other figures to indicate the course of the action.

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[71] Fittschen, *Untersuchungen*, section "Roschmänner".

[72] N. Himmelmann-Wildschütz, "Erzählung und Figur in der archaischen Kunst", *AAWM*, 1967, pp. 73–101.

[73] A.M. Snodgrass, *Narration and Allusion in Archaic Greek Art.* The eleventh J.L. Myres Memorial Lecture (29.5.1981), London 1982; idem, "The First Figure-scenes in Greek Art".

Synoptic scenes are most clearly recognizable and appear in significant numbers in the period between the early seventh and the late sixth centuries. The type was applied whenever the narrative in question contained sufficient coherence as an episode and whenever the number of participants was sufficient to achieve the effect in question.[74] In trying to suggest a tentative answer to the question of the origins of this technique, Snodgrass considered an oenochoe from shortly after 750 B.C. as a possible candidate, but the illustrations of one generation later reveal more and clearer indications of a synoptic manner of representation.[75] Unlike the influence of oriental motifs, this synoptic technique is not to be found in that tradition, and Snodgrass follows other scholars in assuming that the technique was invented by the Geometric vase painters. His analysis also emphasizes the relative autonomy of the visual tradition. It is autonomous in that there is no question of a specific illustration of epic, relative in that the artists used these techniques to render scenes with a narrative character.[76] A second aspect concerns the theme of these representations. Snodgrass argues that the combination of two views of the hero—as an active epic warrior and as immortal object of a cult of devotion—can be traced in the various representations. His observations are in accord with the conclusions on the heroic cults referred to above.[77]

The Tiryns shield displays all kinds of aspects as described by Snodgrass. The Amazonomachy is an episode with the coherence of a scene, with various participants who may indicate the passage of time. This is shown by the dead Greek in the foreground. The bending at the knees of the Amazon and the appearance of her leg emerging from the slit in her dress suggest movement. The crucial moment of the lunge for the helmet crest and the position of the sword are a visual representation of the heroic duel with its ineluctable end. Snodgrass stresses that the viewers must have been familiar enough with this synoptic presentation to be able to interpret the image actively along these lines.[78] The Tiryns shield thus comes as close to a representation of the Amazon motif as was conceivable within the representational techniques of the period. The image of the Amazonomachy is a visual parallel to the epic formula [Amazones antianeirai]. In terms of its setting, this Amazonomachy fitted in with the dual character of heroism. As a narrative motif situated in epic and the heroic battles it contained, it could now be used on a votive shield and function within the framework of the cult of heroes. The votive shield **[no. 2]** might even confirm that a theme of this kind was now regarded as appropriate for a votive object.

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[74] Snodgrass, *Narration and Allusion*, p. 10.

[75] The oenochoe in the Louvre CA 2509 is decorated with a series of small figures. The scene has been identified (by Friis Johansen) as the duel between Aias and Hektor, but it is now generally interpreted as a generic motif, the capture and disarming of prisoners of war; Snodgrass, *Narration and Allusion*, pp. 17–18; fig. 10. For later Geometric examples see pp. 19ff.

[76] Snodgrass, *Narration and Allusion*, pp. 3, 16, 18, and 22.

[77] Snodgrass, "The First Figure-scenes", pp. 158ff.

Although there is a danger of attributing excessive importance to this unique item in a reconstruction of the Amazon motif, it is still possible to draw a few tentative conclusions. If the above analysis of the Tiryns shield is correct, it can no longer be regarded as a representation of Herakles, nor *ipso facto* as the earliest testimony to his Amazonomachy. The earliest secure archaic representation of Herakles fighting the Amazons then becomes the alabastron **[no. 3]**. It should be recalled that it was impossible to trace Herakles' Amazonomachy with certainty in the early archaic literature either. It is therefore probable that the Amazonomachy was entirely confined to—Trojan—epic until the end of the seventh century (alabastron), and on a wider scale until the second quarter of the sixth century (group 1 of the black-figure vase paintings). The visual material thus provides a *terminus ante quem* for a Heraklean Amazonomachy; the theme will not have been much older than these representations.

This reconstruction deviates from the conventional date and view of the Amazon motif, but it is in perfect harmony with other well-known data. First, there is no longer any need to regard the Amazonomachy as an anomaly in the otherwise consistent role of Herakles as a slayer of monsters in the early archaic period. The visual material frequently presents Herakles as the victor over the Nemean Lion, the Hydra, Geryòn and the Boar until the sixth century.[79] Snodgrass points out that these are the very illustrations which do *not* display a synoptic presentation with the suggestion of the passage of time; they illustrate each entire episode by means of a single moment.[80] The Amazons certainly do not belong to this series. On the contrary, there can be no doubt that Herakles was becoming associated with the world of the Trojan epic in a variety of ways during the late archaic period. A striking form of this adhesion can be seen in a Homeric-style epic on Herakles' winning of Iole and the taking of Oichalia. Burkert dates the *Oichalias Halosis* to the late seventh century and shows how it deviates from the current image of Herakles.[81] The occasional references to Herakles in the extant *Iliad* also point to his later inclusion in the Trojan tradition.[82] Likewise, the pseudo-Hesiodic account of the *Shield of Herakles* should be seen as an attempt to incorporate Herakles in "Homeric" poetry in hexameters.[83] All these (pseudo) Homeric narratives illustrate the process encountered above in connection with Bellerophontes: when a figure is transferred from one tradition to another, the *persona* of the figure changes. This was probably the objective in the case of Herakles as well, for the inclusion of the hero in the "Homeric" tradition might be supposed to civilize the brutish Herakles.[84] If the artist of the

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[78] Snodgrass, *Narration*, p. 23.

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[79] Brommer, *Herakles*; Fittschen, *Untersuchungen*, p. 152; Amyx, *Corinthian Vase-Painting*, pp. 628–632.

[80] Snodgrass, *Narration and Allusion*, p. 8.

[81] W. Burkert, "Die Leistung eines Kreophylos. Kreophyleer, Homeriden und die archaïschen Heraklesepik", *MH* 29, 1972, pp. 74–85.

[82] XIV, 266 and 324: genealogical; XV, 25–30: schematically, Herakles as a pawn in the hands of Zeus and Hera; XVIII, 117–119: Herakles too is mortal, once again the plan of the gods; XX, 145ff.: Herakles and the building of Troy. The passage in VIII, 367ff.—the labours of Eurystheus and the fetching of Kerberos—is particularly striking in view of the unmistakably sixth-century character of a first step towards a Herakles cycle. See G.B. Philipp, "Herakles und die frühgriechische Dichtung", *Gymnasium* 91, 1984, pp. 327–340, esp. pp. 333ff. On the narrative tradition connected with Herakles see G.K. Galinsky, *The Herakles-Theme. The Adaptations of the Hero in Literature from Homer to the Twentieth Century*, Oxford 1972, pp. 9–22.

[83] B. Effe, "Die Aristie des Herakles. Zur Homerrezeption des "Aspis"", *Hermes*, 116, 1988, pp. 156–168.

[84] See too my "Patronage and the Pisistratidae", with its discussion of Herakles. In view of the striking attempts to incorporate Herakles in "Homeric" epic, the question arises as to whether the stories of Herakles might have been couched in a different narrative form from the hexameter. Discussion of this issue must also take into account Ruijgh's statement in "Le Mycénien et Homère" that the Heraklean formula [biè Hèraklèeiè] is an

Tiryns shield had included Herakles in what is an epic representation *par excellence*, he would have been taking an extremely unorthodox line. By the late seventh century, however, it is fully comprehensible that black-figure vase painting should confer on Herakles a gesture derived from the epics.

Not only does this reconstruction harmonize with other data on Herakles; it fits in with the earlier conclusions on the visual material. It has already been shown how the representations of the duel of Achilles and Penthesileia, which begin towards the end of the seventh century, display a consistent pattern. This is so different from the representations of Herakles' Amazonomachy that in this case no inscriptions were required to guarantee the correctness of the identification. If the duel had to be distinguished from a different image, it would be more important to distinguish it from a generic "Amazonomachy"—in other words, from the scene on the Tiryns shield.[85] The inscriptions on the "Ainia relief" and the shield-straps were necessary to show that this duel was not the general "Amazonomachy" in miniature, but something else, viz. the duel of Achilles and Penthesileia.

If this result is compared with the analysis of the narrative tradition, the conclusions once again display a certain consistency. As we have seen, the antiquity of the formula [Amazones antianeirai] could not be precisely given, though in formal terms it belongs to an ancient stratum in the creation of poetry in hexameters. The Penthesileia motif was probably derived from this formula, while the formula was probably added under different circumstances to Priamos' Teichoscopy and to the story of Bellerophontes in *Iliad* VI. Archaeological data gave the second half of the seventh century as a *terminus ante quem* for the Penthesileia motif, and the same century has been suggested as the most likely period for the formation of the versions of the Priamos and Bellerophontes narratives. Now the second half of the seventh century turns out to be a likely candidate for the period in which the Herakles version was created, as suggested by Burkert's dating of the *Oichalias Halosis* and the dating of the Korinthian alabastron. Herakles' Amazonomachy would thus have been created

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indication of a very old formation of the hexameter, but this is not the place to explore it any further.

[85] Cf. above, pp. 236–237.

during the last decennia of the seventh century. The unique position of the alabastron in Korinthian vase painting may indicate a possible narrative impulse for this scene. As far as the visual representations are concerned, the increase in synoptic representations may have encouraged this process; as far as narratives are concerned, the adhesion of Herakles to the epic world seems to belong to the same context.

Finally, it should be stressed once again that Herakles' Amazonomachy is a *group enterprise*. Neither the visual nor the pictorial tradition is ambivalent on this score. As for the miniature scenes on black-figure pottery, they are in fact excerpted from the large-scale battle scenes, which continued to serve as the mental frameworks for duels and other forms of fighting on a lesser scale. The location of Herakles' Amazonomachy is indeterminate until the introduction of the theme of the theft of the girdle and the journey to Themiskyra. However, it is certain that Herakles always engages in combat with the Amazons in the company of a large group of comrades, especially Telamon. This detail is in complete contradiction to the other Heraklean Labours, in which the hero, occasionally accompanied by a single companion, Iolaos, must overcome the various monsters on his own. In this connection one should recall the shield-strap reliefs, where Herakles is often represented in single combat with a monster, but where there is no trace of an Amazonomachy. The Amazonomachy thus deviates from the other Labours of Herakles in two respects: he fights human beings instead of monsters; and he fights as one of a large group instead of alone. These deviations can be understood if we suppose that Herakles has borrowed his Amazonomachy from the narratives of the Trojan war, and that attempts were made to attach Herakles more closely to the Trojan world. In other words, instead of isolating one of the Amazons and presenting her as a pseudo-monster, the artists assigned Herakles a complete Amazonomachy in conformity with epic tradition; for epic always referred to an entire Amazon [ethnos] [Amazones antianeirai] as the opponents of the Greek *body of men.*

The *pièce de résistance* to illustrate this combination of themes[86] is the so-called Castellani vase.[87] (**figs. 8a** and **b**). This vase presents an Amazonomachy of Herakles, flanked on the left-hand side by a city with a large double entrance and three towers; the heads of two Amazons can be seen above the walls. On the right-hand side can be seen the heavily damaged remains of some kind of building. There is a transition from the Amazonomachy to a Dionysiac procession with satyrs and asses. The two series do not correspond exactly to the two sides of the vase, but are distributed slightly skewed over the surface.[88] The city recalls Troy, with its famous Skaian gates. The earliest source for the story of the building of Troy is the *Iliad.* It tells how Apollon and Poseidon built the reinforced walls,[89] while a third part was built by a mortal, Aiakos. This was the only part which was not indestructible. Laomedon refused the promised remuneration and was punished by the plague and a sea monster. Herakles freed Troy of the monster in exchange for the horses of Tros, but he was subsequently cheated of his reward. This was why he joined with Telamon, son of Aiakos, to take Troy.[90] The three sections of the Trojan wall are important for the whole Trojan narrative. Moreover, other pieces of Tyrrhenian

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[86] A conflation of themes in the association of Amazons or even the Heraklean Amazonomachy with the Trojan epics may also be found tentatively in early

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Korinthian work. The epic scenes in this vase painting are mainly generic in nature, but there is a quantitatively smaller group which must clearly be identified as specific scenes. By far the most popular of all the epic figures is Achilles; the scenes in which he fights a duel usually involve Hektor or Memnon, while Penthesileia is entirely absent. Remarkably enough, an Amazon, (H)ipponika, does crop up on a scene, which cannot be identified with certainty. It has been interpreted not only as the rape of Kassandra by Aias, or the sacking of Troy, but even as a Gigantomachy or Kentauromachy (because of the presence of Athena). Amyx, *Corinthian vase-painting* p. 638 abstains from judgement, but it is evident that in this case a solitary Amazon has ended up in an epic setting of a different kind from the usual Trojan Amazonomachy.

[87] See p. 149.

[88] B, II, 19; Florence no. 3773; photographs of this vase have been kindly supplied by the Museo Archeologico in Florence. The decoration also includes the departure of Amphiaraos, a horse race with a winning post, spectators and prize (tripod); the neck is decorated with a battle scene and a warrior who is donning his armour and taking his leave, friezes with palmettes, lions and many other figures, accompanied by meaningless inscriptions. On this vase see Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 14; he refers to the lack of mythological precision on the part of the Castellani painter, who on one occasion provides Theseus with a lion skin (Louvre E 850, *ABV* 97, no. 31)—in other words, yet another conflation of themes.

[89] *Il.* VII, 452ff.; cf. XXI, 442ff.

[90] *Il.* V, 640ff.; XIV, 251.

black-figure work may have served as a stimulus too. The name of Herakles' regular opponent in the Amazonomachy is often Andromache (cf. **fig. 9**), a name which was closely associated with Troy. In short, this Amazonomachy reveals a conflation of the following themes: Herakles (with Telamon) against the Amazons; the Amazons at Troy; and Herakles (with Telamon) against Troy.[91] It is more likely that the Castellani painter has combined all these closely related themes in a single scene than that he should have represented *the Amazons* prematurely and uniquely as urban residents.[92] If he was indeed working with "Troy" in the back of his mind, the representation of *female figures* in the city would be quite appropriate.[93]

The reminiscences of the voyage of the Argonauts, with their long journey to the inhospitable East, and the large number of Greek heroes who took part in the enterprize, have probably influenced the Themiskyra version.[94] However, it is of crucial importance that this new version could fit in with the older representation of a collective Heraklean Amazonomachy. It is this deed, and no other, which involved a group of Greek heroes in Herakles' heroic feats. These themes will be discussed when we turn to the black-figure vase paintings and related representations.

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[91] To judge from the photographs, the way the paint has been applied suggests that the scene has been composed as follows: first the duels in the centre, with the city on the left, filled in with warriors from left to right, the city to the right, satyrs from left to right, up to and possibly including Dionysos, a division consisting of two vertical lines, filled in with satyrs and similar figures from right to left, and then the four warriors from the left-hand city to the edge, one of whom goes over the line slightly. The Amazon heads above the walls of the left-hand city may have been added last of all.

[92] As stated by Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 14. However, elsewhere he mentions a Trojan Amazonomachy by the same painter: "The Castellani painter must have found it difficult to compose an Amazonomachy without Herakles", *Amazons*, p. 25. My suspicions are therefore even stronger that the Castellani painter did include Herakles in a Trojan Amazonomachy on one occasion.

[93] To the presence of women in a city, looking out from the walls, a tradition bears witness which can be traced down from Mykenaian times as well, cf. Lorimer, *Homer and the Monuments*, p. 142, fig. 4.

[94] On the importance of the Argonaut story, with the large number of participants and the adventurous voyage, as a framework for the *Odyssey* and other narratives, see K. Meuli, *Odyssee und Argonautika*, Basel 1921 (repr. Arno Press, 1974). Cf. too G. Crane, "The *Odyssey* and Conventions of the Heroic Quest", *CA* 6, 1987, pp. 11–37; Crane sees parallels between the *Odyssey* and the last three Labours of Herakles, therefore omitting any discussion of the Ninth Labour, the Amazonomachy, pp. 35–36.

Amazons in the visual material from the sixth century

By far the most important sixth-century material, both qualitatively and quantitatively, is Attic black-figure vase painting. As far as visual motifs are concerned, the Amazonomachy of Herakles predominates. An idea of the quantities involved and their classification in different categories can be gained from the following surveys of illustrations on vases:

Amazons in black-figure vase painting: themes[95]

Herakles	other (Troy?)	Amazons on their own	date
42	23	5	575–550
ca. 325	ca. 230	ca. 230	ABF 550–end
20	12	53	ARF 530–460

Labours of Herakles: themes and distribution[96]

Lion	Boar	Bull	Amazons	Geryon	Kerberos	
650	136	198	368	69	81	ABF
50	4	13	23	5	10	ARF
21	3	3	6	5	5	archaic non-Attic
4	2	3	12	3	5	post-archaic non-Attic
725	**145**	**217**	**409**	**82**	**101**	**total**

These surveys offer a reasonable picture of the development of the Amazon motif in Attic vase painting. The categories cannot be regarded as watertight, because terms like "archaic" and "classical" are not synonymous with "black-figure" and "red-figure" respectively, and the themes illustrated also exceed the various boundaries.

In quantitative terms the picture is clear: the Amazonomachy is a very popular theme in black-figure vase painting. This prominence cannot be ascribed solely to the profusion of black-figure work itself. The Amazons also occupy a striking position within the theme of "Herakles"—the most popular mythical theme in the whole genre—, second only to the Nemean Lion, while outside the theme of "Herakles" a significant number of vases are also dedicated to the themes of "other Amazonomachy" or "Amazons on their own".

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[95] Numbers from the surveys in Bothmer, *Amazons,* chs. II, III, IV, V, IX, X. The presence of approximate figures and minor discrepancies with Brommer's results are the result of problems of identification, but they are negligible per category.

[96] Following Brommer, *Herakles,* p. 82. Brommer provides a survey of all the labours which were later to become the canonical Twelve Labours. I have selected the most frequent themes in black-figure work.

The enormous popularity of Herakles' Amazonomachy in black-figure work drops with the arrival of red-figure painting; after 460 his Amazonomachy disappears entirely. This decrease in popularity is not confined to the Amazonomachy alone, but applies to the whole range of Heraklean themes. With regard to the Amazons, an additional factor plays a role: the combat with these women is taken over by Theseus and the Athenians. The peak of red-figure production presents the following pattern:

Amazons without Herakles in red-figure vase painting:[97]

Theseus & Athenians	Achilles & Penth.	other (Troy?)	Amazons on their own
ca. 102	3	ca. 20	ca. 70

In quantitative terms, Theseus is thus no match for Herakles and his Amazonomachy, at least as far as the vases are concerned, but there at least equally important representations of the Athenian combat in other media: the metopes on the Parthenon, the shield of Athena Parthenos, and the paintings in the Stoa Poikilè, to mention only a few.[98]

The main question in this section is that of determining what this visual material tells us about the development of the Amazon motif in the late archaic period. The primary focus of attention will be the Heraklean Amazonomachy, but the other groups of representations demand some attention too. The line of demarcation adopted is the evident change in the representation of the myths in question which took place at the end of the sixth century, and which manifested itself in three ways. First, there was a rapidly growing tendency to arrange the stories concerning heroes like Herakles and Theseus in cycles, as can be seen in the metopes on the treasury of Athens in Delphoi and the vases illustrating the Theseus cycle.[99] Without hazarding premature conclusions, it would appear that such series of metopes were the first to make these cycles possible, as can be seen, for example, from the mid-sixth century representation of the Labours of Herakles, including the Amazonomachy, on the temple at Selinous. However, the monumental archaeological material will not be treated in its own right in the present study, because I prefer to analyse the more large-scale developments mainly as they are to be found in vase painting. Second, I regard the intervention of Theseus in the Amazon motif as a caesura: this story, which is only attested at first from ca. 525 in the visual material, begins with the rape of Antiope, a motif with which the Amazon invasion of Attika and the struggle of the Athenians against these women came to be associated. At first sight the Athenian Amazonomachy matches the already existing traditions on the Amazonomachy, but the rape of Antiope marks an essential departure from the traditional Amazon motif. Third, the development of Herakles' theft of the girdle will be more or less left out of account. This motif is probably connected with the Theseus version, as well as fitting in with Herakles' previous Amazonomachy. The relation between the two versions is a complex problem, especially because the narrative framework of the voyage of the Argonauts appears to have had some influence on these developments. However, since the theft of the girdle is only attested with certainty in the fifth century, this theme will only crop up in the discussion where it can throw light on the changes in the Amazon motif in the sixth century. In short, the caesurae that I have adopted concern changes in the myths, not specific characteristic changes in the visual record itself, such as the transition from black-figure to red-figure. In practice the visual material can be divided into three categories: early black-figure (ca. 575–ca. 550); middle archaic black-figure (ca. 550–ca. 525); and late archaic material (ca. 525–5th century classical red-figure). In view of the continuity of certain visual themes, these caesurae will be handed with a degree of flexibility. The period dealt with here draws to a close around 525. Although cases in which the caesurae in visual themes coincide with changes in technical or stylistic execution are probably not fortuitous, I shall not discuss that aspect of the problem here.

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[97] From Bothmer, *Amazons*, chs. IX and X. The theme of "The rape of Antiope" is not included, see Bothmer, *Amazons*, ch. VIII.

[98] The identity of the Amazonomachy on the temple of Apollon in Bassae is disputed, Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 215.

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[99] Brommer, *Herakles*; on the narrative structure of these cycles see Snodgrass, *Narration and Allusion*, pp. 4–5.

Before proceeding to examine the Attic black-figure work, it is worth considering the question of possible influences from outside Attika. There is no trace of Amazons in Attic vase painting before the early black-figure group (575–550). The only representation that is earlier than these vases is the terracotta "Ainia" relief, dating from around 600 B.C.[100] All of the artefacts discussed so far—both the early representations of Achilles and Penthesileia and those depicting the earliest Amazonomachies, including the alabastron with Herakles,[101] have a non-Attic provenance. The sudden emergence of large numbers of vases in the early group therefore comes as a surprise.[102] The majority of these vases consist of so-called Tyrrhenian vases, often neck amphorae, whose name is derived from the fact that they were found in Etruria; it is generally assumed that they were produced to be retailed there. It was during these decennia that Attic work began to drive Korinthian ware from the market for good, while the vases still display a variety of Korinthian elements,[103] as can be seen not only from Korinthian ornaments, but also from the form of the letters. These vases are heavily decorated with inscriptions, some of them in Greek, others with no meaning at all. They were supposed to give these vases a "genuine Greek" flavour, even though the customers were probably unable to read Greek.[104] All the same, the Attic element is clear enough in the continuity of the iconographical motifs until the middle archaic black-figure work postdating 550. Even though the first Heraklean Amazonomachy is to be found on the Korinthian alabastron, the relation between this vase and the Attic work consists merely in the fact that the Heraklean Amazonomachy is portrayed as a group activity.

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[100] See above, p. 224.

[101] See above, pp. 225ff., 356ff.

[102] See too Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 6.

[103] On this black-figure group see H. Thiersch, "*Tyrrhenische*" *Amphoren. Eine Studie zur Geschichte der altattischen Vasenmalerei*, Leipzig 1899; D. von Bothmer, "The Painters of "Tyrrhenian vases"", *AJA* 1944, pp. 161–170. T.H. Carpenter, "The Tyrrhenian Group; Problems of Provenance", *OxJA* 3, 1984, pp. 45–56 claims that many of the vase painters in question were trained in Athens, but that they also betray other influences; he does not exclude the possibility of workshops in Eretria. On the style of these vases see Payne, *Necrocorinthia*, pp. 181ff. For the inscriptions see also Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas*, pp. 17–18, 202.

[104] Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas*, p. 18.

A small number of items of pottery, manufactured outside Attika, can be dated to the decennia around the middle of the 6th century: two Chalkidian vases, one depicting Achilles and Penthesileia with the first representation of the queen on horseback;[105] three "pseudo-Chalkidian" vases, viz. one Herakles, one Troy and one Amazon on horseback;[106] two vases from Boiotia, one with Herakles and one with an Amazon dismounting;[107] a drinking bowl from Lakonia with Herakles and two Amazons—the only reference to the Amazon motif in Lakonia—which iconographically tallies with the Herakles representations in fashion there;[108] and four representations from Chalkis, though it is not certain that they are of Amazons.[109] All of these illustrations display a combination of local traditions with the influence of Attic vases, which had already come to occupy an extremely dominant position.

It is evident from this survey that this black-figure work cannot have been influenced by non-Attic work in any essential way. It is an autonomous product. In view of the absence of contemporary texts, it is impossible to determine whether the sudden popularity of Amazons in black-figure work is connected with a specific story. Opinions on the origin of these representations are bound to confine themselves to general impressions and are based on this material itself. Still, it may be concluded that, once black-figure came into its own as a product, the Amazons already formed an extremely important element in the repertoire of themes. Furthermore, as production of this pottery increased, the place occupied in it by the Amazons grew apace, or even more.

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[105] B VI, 1 and 2; cf. above, pp. 229–230. Cf. A. Rumpf, *Chalcidische Vasen. Im Auftrag des Archäologisches Instituts des Deutschen Reiches*, Berlin 1927, 3 vols., p. 104.

[106] B VI, 7, 8, 9. Cf. Rumpf, *Chalcidische Vasen*, p. 151.

[107] B VI, 10 and 11.

[108] B VI, 12.

[109] B VI, 3–6.

Amazonomachies

We are now in a position to tackle the description and interpretation of the black-figure work on which Amazonomachies are featured. The Heraklean Amazonomachy commences with these vase paintings in Attic art, and apart from the *unicum* **[no. 3]**, in Greek art as a whole. The identity of the scene can now be determined with certainty, because Herakles is constantly represented with his lion skin. He does not have a club, but usually fights with a sword, sometimes with a spear as well. Moreover, a number of these vases include inscriptions.[110] There are almost twice as many extant examples of this Herakles scene as of the other Amazonomachy. The question therefore arises of the identity of the "other" Amazonomachy and of its relation to the scenes of battle in which Herakles can be securely identified as the main protagonist. This will be approached from two angles: the possibility that the theme on the reverse of the vase offers some indication; and the function of the inscriptions.

When a vase is decorated on both sides, one can tentatively inquire whether a relation exists between them both. For instance, in the section on the duel of Achilles and Penthesileia, the scene could be identified in a number of cases by means of the representation of the duel of Achilles and Memnon on the reverse side. In the early black-figure group, many vases in both the series of the Heraklean Amazonomachy (A) and that of the "other" Amazonomachy (B) have a representation on the reverse side too. Some of these scenes are clearly mythical,[111] but the majority offer a picture of the drinking party for which many of these vases were undoubtedly intended, or of the particular interests of those who used them: song, dance, wine, sex, competitions, horses. However, there is no case of a scene from series A being coupled with one from series B (a phenomenon which is found on a few occasions in later black-figure work). In the early group, then, these two kinds of Amazonomachy are clearly distinguished. This leads to the conclusion that they refer to different situations in battle was done with the Amazons. A few cases in series B can be identified with the Trojan War, either because the iconography of the central duel corresponds to the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia,[112] or on the basis of the reverse side, provided this is accepted as an argument.[113] If these examples are regarded as typical, it would be plausible to identify the whole group B as the Trojan Amazonomachy.

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[110] See below, n. 115.

[111] B II, 19: departure of Amphiaraos; II, 51: Kentauromachy; II, 54: Achilles and Memnon.

There is one striking difference between the two series. The numerous inscriptions are only to be found in series A, the Heraklean Amazonomachy.[114] (These inscriptions have already been mentioned in connection with the names of the Amazons.) Almost all of the Greeks and Amazons on the vases in question are named: the commonest names for the Greeks are Herakles and Telamon, while the Amazon queen is usually labelled as Andromache. These inscriptions cannot just be intended to identify the scene, as in the case of the alabastron **[no. 3]**, since the identity of Herakles is obvious enough on this black-figure work through the presence of the lion skin. Comparison of this early group with later black-figure confirms this picture: the Heraklean Amazonomachy is accompanied by inscriptions—though proportionally not as many as in the period 575–550—while the "other" Amazonomachy lacks inscriptions except in two cases of the duel of Achilles and Penthesileia, one of which is the famous vase by Exekias.[115] With allowance for these two exceptions, then, the whole black-figure oeuvre makes use of inscriptions to distinguish the Heraklean Amazonomachy from the "other" Amazonomachy.

The Amazonomachies in black-figure vase painting after 550 represent a continuation of the early group, but they also display a development of their own. The problems of identification are the same as in the previous group: the identification of Herakles raises no problems, but the "other" Amazonomachy is unclear in this respect. In iconographical terms we have the Heraklean Amazonomachies, in which the hero is accompanied by two or more Greeks, each of whom is engaged in combat with an Amazon. This series follows the composition which commenced in the early group on the "Tyrrhenian" vases. It later gives way to "incomplete" groups, and scenes in which the Greek companions of Herakles either have no opponent, appearing as marginal figures in the scene, or assist Herakles. In the third group, the largest by far, Herakles engages in solitary combat with one or more Amazons.[116]

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[112] I, 53; cf. Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 24–25.

[113] E.g. II, 54; see Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 24–25; and II, 53, where various duels between Greeks and Trojans provide an indication, although Bothmer himself is puzzled by the Amazonomachy because one Amazon is being attacked by another, *Amazons*, p. 26.

[114] B II, 1, 3, 5, 8, 11, 25, 36, 38, 39, 40. These are genuine, legible inscriptions.

[115] B IV, 2, VI, 105; see above, p. 230, **no. 1** and **no. 12**.

The reason for this gradual fragmentation of the original pattern can be found in the changing size of the amphorae. They became narrower, so that there was no longer room for the full group which had appeared on the earlier vases. In this respect these amphorae bear comparison with other small-scale work, such as drinking bowls, where there was naturally no room for large-scale scenes.[117] The representation of the solitary figure of Herakles fighting a single Amazon, as pointed out earlier, therefore has a completely different background to the duel of Achilles and Penthesileia. Achilles never fights more than one Amazon, while Herakles engages in combat with one, two, three or more Amazons.[118] Nevertheless, we cannot regard the decrease in size of the surface area of the vase as the decisive factor, for although this is responsible for the necessity to reduce the size of the representation, it does not determine *which* smaller representation is chosen. The pattern of Herakles fighting on his own against one or more Amazons is related to conceptions of the hero himself. For it is in this period that the representations of his feats increasingly acquire the character of an icon, a regular picture of the hero, containing not so much the action as the completion of the hero's cultural activities. Attention is focused on Herakles alone, so that if the surface of a vase offered enough space for four figures, the choice fell on Herakles with three Amazons rather than on the duels of Herakles and Telamon with their Amazon opponents.

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[116] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 30.

[117] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 48.

[118] Herakles with one Amazon, B III, section C, 44 examples, no inscriptions for Herakles or Amazon; with one Amazon plus spectators, B III, section D, 20 examples, no inscriptions; with Andromache (one inscription, ditto Herakles) and one Amazon, B III, section E, 25 examples; in duel with (Andromache), one Amazon behind Herakles, B III, section F, 18 examples, no inscriptions; with three or more Amazons, in various arrangements, B III, section G, 109 examples, occasional inscriptions for Herakles and Andromache; finally, two sections, B III I with Amazons on horseback, 13 examples, and J, with chariots, 9 examples.

The appearance of the hero remains more or less the same. Around the middle of the century the club makes its entry as Herakles' weapon, virtually replacing the spear; the sword, his regular weapon from the early black-figure on, remains extremely frequent.[119]

The "other" Amazonomachy can be divided into three main groups. The first is that of the large-scale confrontation on foot. The second consists of Amazonomachies in which the combatants are mounted on horseback. The third is a group of Amazonomachies with chariots.[120]

Unlike the early group, we sometimes find an Amazonomachy of the first group (Herakles) and an Amazonomachy of the second group on opposite sides of the same vase. Nevertheless, there is still a difference between the two types. The theme of Amazons on horseback or with chariots is of only minor significance in the Herakles group,[121] but this is a mature and common theme in the 230 or so examples of the other Amazonomachy.[122] This leads one to suppose that horses and chariots formed an integral part of the "other" Amazonomachy, but were not regarded as applicable to the Heraklean Amazonomachy. In this respect, then, an attempt was made to distinguish the two types in terms of content.[123]

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[119] Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 45 and 60. The fact that the lion skin antedates the club as an attribute of Herakles by some decennia seems to contradict the Peisandros of Rhodos hypothesis. This alleged epic origin cannot explain why the lion skin is an attribute of Herakles in the archaeological record from ca. 575, while the club did not make its appearance until some 25 years later.

[120] B IV section A: the battle on foot, can be further broken down into the following subcategories: 1. duel (31 examples, including Exekias' duel between Achilles and Penthesileia with inscriptions); 2. duel with spectators (39 examples); 3. a trio of an Amazon between two Greeks (7 examples); 4. a trio of a Greek between two Amazons (35 examples); 5. two or more groups. Section B: Amazonomachy with combatants on horseback (41 examples, including Achilles and Penthesileia with inscriptions (IV 105; see above, Penthesileia, **no. 12**, cf. the remarks in Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 82). Section C: Amazonomachy with chariots (76 examples).

[121] Only 14 of the approximately 325 scenes with Herakles include a mounted Amazon; 13 of these are simply repetitions from the same workshop; see Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 66–67. Nine examples feature Amazons on or associated with chariots; these scenes are almost without exception striking cases of conflation, in which the Amazons may have found themselves placed in the iconography of the Gigantomachy; see Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 68–69.

[122] There are two mounted figures (Greeks or Amazons) in 22 cases; in 7 cases there are only mounted Greeks; and in 11 cases only mounted Amazons are featured. Amazons with chariots can be found in 23 cases, to which we can add a group of 54 skyphoi (a repetition of the theme, all from the same workshop).

We have now seen that the Amazonomachies in black-figure work can be classified as belonging to two groups, distinguished from one another in a variety of ways. In some cases the second group (B) can be identified as a Trojan Amazonomachy because of the iconographical parallel between the central duel and that between Achilles and Penthesileia or because of the scene on the reverse side of the vase. Nevertheless, an extension of this identification to the entire second group—a labelling of the "other" Amazonomachy as a Trojan Amazonomachy—is rejected by Bothmer, who refers to the "Herakles Amazonomachy without Herakles". However, if we return to the narratives in which the Amazonomachies are situated, this notion becomes untenable. As the analyses in the previous chapters have shown, the motif of the Amazonomachy, an independent theme which could operate in shorter or longer versions as a structural ingredient in epic, was introduced into the series of feats by (heroic) figures. The Homeric formula and the Tiryns shield represent the earliest textual and visual examples of the independent motif respectively. Still, it was difficult to represent the Amazons without a more specific context in which they could be delineated as the opponents of a particular hero. The [Amazones antianeirai] were thus portrayed in combat with one or more Greeks, and on the assumption that they were the losers. From the perspective of the hero or heroes, however, the representation of a non-specific situation is inconceivable, since it is impossible to omit the main protagonist himself, around whom the events are clustered, from the centre of the stage. Bothmer's notion of a Heraklean Amazonomachy without Herakles is thus not viable: such a representation is no longer a Heraklean Amazonomachy, but an independent Amazonomachy.

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[123] It would be worthwhile for a specialist to investigate whether in the course of time the Heraklean Amazonomachy in particular was reduced to scenes on a smaller scale involving a trio or a duel, while the more large-scale battle scenes were reserved for the "other" Amazonomachy. If this conclusion should emerge from a more precise dating of the vases, the distribution of the number of large-scale horse and chariot scenes would also have to be interpreted in terms of the dimensions of the items in question. For present purposes I assume that the choice of the various scenes was not determined by the dimensions of the vases, but primarily by the way in which the scenes themselves were understood.

If we consider the range of stories about Amazons which were in circulation at the beginning of the sixth century, our choice is limited to two: the Trojan Amazonomachy and the Amazonomachy involving Herakles and his companions. It has been concluded that the former is the older of the two, which is why the Trojan Amazonomachy has the closest association with an "Amazonomachy" as such. Analysis of the early visual record led to the hypothesis that Herakles' battle with the Amazons was derived from this epic form, not to the exclusion of the Trojan version, but in addition to it. Both textual and iconographical analysis pointed in the same direction.

Bothmer and many other scholars, on the other hand, regard the Heraklean Amazonomachy as a current theme from the start. Assuming the presence of this hero everywhere in (archaic) Greece, either as a monster-killer and culture hero or as a protector [alexikakos], Bothmer took the battle with the Amazons to be one of Herakles' standard feats as well. It is strange that none of these scholars has paid attention to the divergence of the Amazonomachy from Herakles' archaic pattern. Bothmer's assumptions therefore led him to regard the Heraklean Amazonomachy as normative in black-figure as well, a conclusion which seemed to find support in the large number of representations of this theme in the archaeological record. This explains how he arrived at the remarkable notion of a Heraklean Amazonomachy without Herakles. However, there is a better way of interpreting the material.

The hypothesis concerning the early material is by and large confirmed in the black-figure work. If one is to place the B group within a narrative context, it must surely be that of the Trojan Amazonomachy, for—using the *argumentum e silentio*—what else could it be? However, it is also possible to assign the B group an emblematic character and to label it as an autonomous "Amazonomachy". As emerged from the analysis of the stories of Priamos and Bellerophontes in the *Iliad*, the Amazon motif certainly had a certain mobility within the broader framework of the epic. The general interest in the Homeric tradition in sixth-century Athens will also have encouraged the utilization of this relative autonomy. And it is this relative autonomy within the context of the epic, I believe, which can be seen in the many representations of the "other" Amazonomachy. While it can be maintained that any *story* about battle with the Amazons requires the presence of one or more heroes to feature as their opponents and to sustain the story and the narrative perspective, it is perfectly possible to present the "Amazonomachy" as an autonomous theme without the need to specify the identity of the Greek opponents in *visual representations*. This is only possible, however, if a narrative context can be evoked by the representation (this context was and remained primarily that of the Trojan epic); and if there are sufficient indications of the autonomy of the theme "Amazonomachy" within that context (this autonomy is guaranteed by the potential of the formula and respected in the stories of Priamos and Bellerophontes).

From this perspective, let us now return to the inscriptions on the early vases which add names to the figures involved in the Amazonomachy. Why is the identity of the combatants indicated in group A but not in group B? After all, Herakles could be unambiguously identified on the basis of his lion skin.[124] As we have seen in the case of the inscriptions on the Korinthian alabastron, it was apparently necessary to refer to Herakles explicitly by name. Since the epic tradition was the fixed point of reference for the Amazonomachy, in the absence of inscriptions it would be natural to imagine a Trojan setting rather than one involving Herakles. The inscriptions on the black-figure vases show that there was still a need to identify Herakles clearly, precisely in the Amazonomachy, even when the addition of his attributes made this redundant. The explosive growth of popularity of the Heraklean Amazonomachy towards the middle of the sixth century did little to alter this situation. However, the realization that these inscriptions were not actually necessary may have made itself felt in a gradual way, so that they came to be applied less and less frequently. This trend will have been strengthened by the fact that the "Tyrrhenian" vases were intended for the Etruscan market and were therefore richly decorated with Greek inscriptions, while the later black-figure work was destined for a wider market—probably particularly in Athens itself. Nonetheless, this does not provide a full explanation, for if all that mattered in the early group was the imparting of a Greek flavour to the vases, meaningless inscriptions would have done the job just as well. Besides, the "Tyrrhenian" vases were primarily an Attic product, and the influence of the Etruscan market on the way in which they were decorated will only have been of secondary importance.

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[124] Though it should not be forgotten that the number of inscriptions decreases; they are far less common in black-figure work after 550 than in the earlier group.

A second aspect of these inscriptions concerns the choice of the names of the Amazons. As demonstrated earlier,[125] some of these are female names associated with epic, such as Andromache; others are feminized versions of the names of men who are known from the Trojan epic, including some who fought on the Trojan side; and there are a few other striking names and terms from epic as well.[126] It is certainly the case that some of these names may be traced to a difference source from epic, and it may be claimed that Glauke (grey, grey-eyed), Areto (virtuous) and Antimache (a match for the fight) are suitable Amazon names which any vase painter could have invented. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, the number of reminiscences of epic which these names suggest is too great to be due to chance. They may therefore be seen as a further confirmation of the process by which the Heraklean Amazonomachy was derived from the Trojan version.

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[125] See above, p. 218ff.

[126] In the earliest material (I) and in the early group 575–550 (II): Ainippe (II, 3 and 8); Alkaia (II, 3) Anaxilea (II, 3), Andromache (II, 1, 3, 8, 11, 25), Andromeda (I, 4), Antimache (II, 36), Areto (II, 6), Areximacha (I, 4), Glauke (II, 1, 3, 25), Hegeso (II, 25), Iphito (II, 1), Kallie (II, 25), Kepes (II, 25) Kleptoleme (II, 25), Lykopis (II, 40), Okypous (II, 25), Pantariste (II, 3, 8), Pisto (II, 25), Skyleia (II, 39), Telepyleia (II, 39), Toxophile (II, 25). The numbering is Bothmer's and concerns the Heraklean Amazonomachy (thereby excluding Penthesileia and Ainia). For affinity with names known from the extant Homeric epics, compare Andromache, Antimache (Antimachos), Areto (Arete, Aretos, Aretaon), Glauke (Glaukos), Iphito (Iphitos), Kallie (cf. Kallianassa and Kallianeira: Nereids), Kepes (Kapus), Kleptoleme (Tlepolemos), Lykopis (Lykie, Lykos), Okypous (epithet of horses), Skyleia (cf. Skylla? but see also below, p. 414), Telepyleia (Telepylos; cf. too Telephides = son of Telephos = Eurypylos), Toxophile (cf. [toxophoros], epithet of Artemis).

This hypothesis also throws some light on another aspect, the style of painting. Bothmer observed that there is a certain similarity between series A and series B as regards the depiction of weapons and armour and the composition of the battle scenes as a whole.[127] Incidentally, we are here primarily concerned with iconographical patterns in the strict sense. Since there is general agreement on the modest artistic qualities and the relatively clumsy execution of the early group of vases, one should not expect such thematic refinement and distinction that the painters should apply completely different figures or armour in one Amazonomachy than in the other. Bothmer regarded this similarity as sufficient to identify series B with series A. In view of the considerations advanced above, however, I feel justified in reversing his argument and concluding that series A is a reflection of series B. In representing the Heraklean Amazonomachy, the vase painters had to make it clear that this was not the standard Amazonomachy. They did so by means of the central duel between Herakles (with the lion skin) and the Amazon, and by applying inscriptions. In other respects, the painters of this early group could follow the conventional Amazonomachy, which is iconographically closely related to the conflict between Greek and Trojans anyway. It is in this group, then, that the remarkable conflation of Herakles with Troy took place in connection with the Amazonomachy on the vase by the Castellani painter.

Black-figure vases dating from after ca. 550 follow the early group in terms of composition, but they also display a development of their own. There is a remarkable innovation in the detachment of Herakles from the large group to which he originally belonged, engaged in a duel or fighting a limited number of Amazons. As we have seen, these new, small-scale compositions are connected with the decreasing size of the surface of the vase, but these representations of Herakles were seen in the first place as the prerogative of this hero. In engaging in single combat, the hero continues the convention by which he took on monsters single-handed, the feats on which his reputation was originally based.

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[127] "As there are no inscriptions, it is not always clear which particular myth is meant. Occasionally there are indications which point to the battle of Troy, with Achilles and Penthesileia. Most of them, however, might well be pictures of the battle at Themiskyra, with Herakles omitted. Many of the vases are painted by the same artists who painted some of the Heraclean Amazonomachies [. . .] and their composition as well as details in arms and armour are not unlike those of the scenes in which Heracles is featured." Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 10.

There are also changes in the "other" Amazonomachy, which we can now refer to as the standard or Trojan Amazonomachy. The possibility of isolating duos or trios in the general mêlée, scenes of combat between Greeks and Trojans which are well known from the *Iliad*, was utilized to the full. A more striking innovation is the introduction of horses and chariots in these Amazonomachies. This can be related to the general interest in horses and chariots which black-figure displays; while the Trojan War was originally represented as a combat on foot, chariots were added after 550.[128] Chariots referred particularly to the epic stories, for they had no function in the hoplite phalanx with which the actual wars were fought. There was a tradition of representing chariots which extended to long before black-figure vase painting.[129] The large number of illustrations of Amazonomachies with chariots in series B matches this development and can be seen as an indication that these scenes were closely associated with the epic battle. On the other hand, these chariots are virtually absent from series A, the Heraklean Amazonomachy. The special character of the Heraklean Amazonomachy by comparison with series B is thus also expressed in the innovatory patterns with regard to typical differences in attributes. An even more striking innovation is the presence of horses in black-figure scenes after ca. 550. Although cavalry troops were used to support infantry, and it is generally assumed that Thrakian auxiliary forces were present in Attika in the sixth century, the interest in horses on Attic and non-Attic work from the sixth century cannot be explained entirely by these practices. In fact, these scenes represent a combination of heroic and contemporary elements.[130] Horse-ownership was not just a matter of waging war, but it was a symbol of status among the male aristocrats of Athens, and was not directly associated with the epic.

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[128] P.A.L. Greenhalgh, *Early Greek Warfare. Horsemen and Chariots in the Homeric and Archaic Ages*, Cambridge 1973, ch. VI, esp. pp. 11ff.; Webster, Potter and Patron, ch. 14.

[129] Greenhalgh, *Early Greek Warfare*, chs. I and II.

[130] Greenhalgh, *Early Greek Warfare*, pp. 96ff. Cf. Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier*, Ch. VIII.

This survey of the visual record down to archaic black-figure leads us to conclude that representations of an Amazonomachy referred primarily to the Trojan Amazonomachy, or featured as an independent theme that was very closely associated with the Trojan Amazonomachy. This basic form was adapted for the representation of Herakles by means of attributes and inscriptions after the hero's introduction to the Amazonomachy in the last decennia of the seventh century. The resulting distinction between two kinds of Amazonomachy was further elaborated in the course of the sixth century: while the Trojan Amazons acquired themes which were new in this context, such as chariots, the representation of Herakles in smaller-scale combat scenes was adjusted to fit the general representation of the hero. The latter tendency had as its side-effect a relative masking of the fact that the Heraklean Amazonomachy was originally derived from the Trojan or general Amazonomachy. On the whole, the production of sixth century vase painting invited new interpretations of the traditional images.

The identity of the Amazons

Suddenly, around the middle of the sixth century, a large number of Amazons on their own appear in middle archaic black-figure vase painting. They are involved in all kinds of lively scenes: they are donning armour, leaving for the fray, returning from battle with their dead, leading, riding or dismounting from horses, equipping chariots or riding in them. These scenes, which are to be found on some 230 black-figure vases, portray the Amazons as being engaged in the same activities in which male warriors feature in vase painting, as Bothmer correctly observes.[131]

It is true that there were five examples of vases illustrating Amazons on their own in the early group from 575–550, but they are either detached from battle scenes like an isolated quotation, or they are set among heraldic animal figures.[132] In other words, these Amazons function as decorative emblems and do not fulfil any activity which might furnish them with a context.

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[131] Bothmer, Amazons, p. 91.

[132] B II, 65–66: excerpt from battle scenes; II, 67–69: among heraldic animal figures.

Let us examine these scenes of Amazons on their own in more detail. The theme "Amazons don their armour" (23 examples) forms a highly diverse group. The breastplate is put on while a woman (identified by Bothmer as the Amazon's mother) holds the shield and helmet (B V, 2); the greaves are attached (V, 6, 10, 15); archers tighten their bows (V, 10, 14) or take up their shields (V, 8, 10); hoplites put on their helmets (V, 7, 11); the spears are picked up (V, 19); the trumpet is sounded (V, 21); and the Amazons are ready to set out for the fray (V, 18).[133] There is not always a scene on the reverse side (lekythoi, for example, only have one scene), but where this is the case we find a very mixed assortment: two cases of the Heraklean Amazonomachy (V, 5–6), one of the "other" Amazonomachy (V, 9), four of Amazons with horses (V, 4, 8, 10, 21) and various other themes.

The second group, "Amazons set out on foot", contains a total of 44 examples, covering a variety of themes which are not always easy to define. Sometimes the Amazons seem to be leaving for battle, sometimes it would appear that they are returning from battle. Only one representation can be identified precisely (V, 23): the negro in the scene is a reference to the Aithiopian troops of Memnon, so that the scene must represent the battle before Troy. This may also be taken to account for the presence of male warriors (V, 26, 26 bis, 29 ter). Dogs are included in the scene in four closely related examples (V, 43–46), and one vase includes a lion (V, 33). There are only five examples with an illustration on the reverse side, containing various themes; the most important of these, V, 27, will be discussed in more detail below.[134]

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[133] Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier*, Ch. II shows how the donning of armour, particularly the greaves, marks the identity of the Greek hoplite. Non-Greeks, such as the Skythian archer and the flanking figures of an old man and a woman, confirm the identity of the adult male Greek warrior. Amazons serve to indicate the margins as well, but they are represented as hoplite warriors too, including the significant wearing of greaves. In this iconography, Amazons operate as a category of their own, since they can signify either alterity or the norm itself. As [antianeirai] they are rendered as hoplites, except for the heroic nakedness. Hence Lissarrague labels their role as "cet espace de la confusion qu'est l'armée des Amazones" (p. 33) and "le monde inquiétant des Amazones" (p. 132), where male and female, Greek hoplite and Skythian archer, can merge.

[134] B V, 23: Triptolemos; V, 24: young men pursue women; V, 25: leave-taking of a warrior; V, 26: Dionysos with satyr and maenad; V, 27: Amazons leave the field of battle with a dead comrade.

A striking innovation is the theme "Amazons carry off their dead". This is a relatively small group (9 examples), which includes a few unusual items. The first representation of this scene is a *unicum* from the 575–550 group, in which the scene forms part of the Heraklean Amazonomachy.[135] The association of the earliest examples in the post-550 black-figure series with the same context can be seen from the illustration on the reverse of one of these,[136] showing the Amazonomachy of Herakles.[137] Another representation, where the theme is part of Herakles' fight with the Amazons, confirms that the context in question is the Heraklean Amazonomachy.[138] The remaining scenes are autonomous. In one case the Amazon is probably not dead, but wounded.[139] There is a completely unique instance in one scene of a dead Amazon whose skin is not white but light grey, presumably to indicate that she is dead.[140] Three examples in this group have a representation on the reverse side: Herakles in his Amazon duel;[141] Dionysos and a satyr;[142] and two Amazons on foot.[143] One of these items, finally, has inscriptions which declare that Melo and Korone are [kalè]—a remarkable combination with the scene on this bowl.[144]

The group of vases decorated with the theme "Amazons leading horses", on the other hand, is considerable in size: ca. 54 examples. Although there are variations in the iconography, the context of these scenes can be identified as the Trojan Amazonomachy with a reasonable degree of certainty. This is indicated by the striking frequency of male warriors on the Amazon side, and by the fact that one of the vases contains a representation of the duel between Achilles and Memnon on the reverse side.[145]

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[135] B, II, 39; see also Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 96.

[136] According to Bothmer, this can be seem from the iconography as well; B, V, 59–60 bis: direction and composition of the action, see Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 96.

[137] B, V, 59; also III, 70.

[138] B, III, 28. See Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 96.

[139] B V, 63; Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 97.

[140] B, V, 59; see Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 96.

[141] B V, 59.

[142] B, V 62.

[143] B, V, 63; cf. V, 27.

[144] B V, 60. The iconography corresponds to that of the Herakles series. Compare Bothmer's comments on this item, *Amazons*, pp. 96–97.

[145] Male warriors: B, V, 67, 71, 72, 90, 94 bis, 96, 105, 105 bis, 106, 107. Duel on reverse: V, 67. Furthermore: Amazon with horse next to a seated man (Priamos?) V, 72, 107. See Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 100.

An important group is formed by the theme "Amazons on horseback". This series can be broken down into two subgroups: Amazons on horseback as a self-contained theme; and Amazons on horseback which are added to a different theme. The latter subgroup, comprising a total of 29 examples, consists almost entirely of lekythoi from the workshop of a single painter, the so-called Haimon group. The Amazons are added to scenes of Herakles and the Wild Boar (10 cases), Herakles and the Lion (1 case), Herakles and the Bull (3 cases), Aias and Achilles playing dice (1 case), Athena with a Giant (11 cases), and a small number of other themes.[146] The former subgroup is reasonably large: 54 examples. It includes some large vases with more one than scene. In four cases a Heraklean Amazonomachy is indicated as the context on the reverse side; in one case, even though the reverse side is decorated with the dragging of Hektor's corpse, the inscription of the name Andromache indicates that this is a Heraklean Amazonomachy.[147] The main aspect of this subgroup, however, is the association with Thrakians. In nine cases the Amazons even wear a Thrakian cloak, and on one neck amphora the reverse side is decorated with two Thrakian horsemen.[148]

There is a modest series of 15 items depicting Amazons with war chariots. These are all late archaic pieces, some of which, according to Bothmer, betray the influence of red-figure techniques. This is particularly interesting on a column krater (V, 185) with black-figure painting on a white ground. As a result of this technique, the white skin of the Amazons was no longer a clear enough indication, so the painter added breasts.[149] The iconography of this series is varied, and so is the choice of (rare) illustrations on the reverse side.

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[146] See Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 105–106. Bothmer wonders whether these mounted Amazons have been borrowed from the Heraklean Amazonomachy and subsequently added to other scenes involving Herakles, *Amazons*, p. 106. This is unlikely, because Amazons on horseback are hardly to be found in the Heraklean Amazonomachy.

[147] Reverse Herakles: V, 111, 122, 123, 127; Trojan reverse: V, 112, 125. The inscription, however, is to be found on V, 112 as well, so that it is not permissible to assume an immediate connection between the obverse and reverse sides.

[148] Amazons with Thrakian cloaks: V, 114, 117, 120, 136, 142 ter, 152, 154 bis, 155, 156. Thrakians on the reverse side: V, 116. See also Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 104–105.

[149] See Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 108–109.

Finally, we must consider a few scenes which are not directly identifiable. Two examples contain a scene of a single Amazon beside an altar.[150] In the case of a number of other scenes, it is not even certain that they concern Amazons at all. On V, 197 a female archer, seated on a lion, attacks a strange monster. V, 198 contains four serpent nymphs, one of which bears a pelta, an "oriental" cap and a spear, of a type that by this time had become common attributes of the Amazons.[151] The objects carried by the others are a column krater and a drinking beaker, while one of them plays the flute. V, 199 depicts three figures dressed as Amazons and dancing to the music of a flautist. On V, 200 we see four women, dressed in chiton, cuirass and pointed hat, walking to the right, their arms outstretched, with branches bearing a white fruit in the background.[152]

For completeness' sake, I mention the illustrations of Amazons on their own in red-figure work from the late archaic to the classical period.[153] This group is much smaller (ca. 53 examples) than its counterpart in contemporary black-figure work, and contains a good deal of variation. Most of these scenes correspond to the themes to be found in the black-figure work, but there are a few divergences which are worth mentioning. These illustrations sometimes represent the breasts of the Amazons clearly beneath the chiton,[154] in accordance with the tendency of red-figure painters to depict women in this way. A series of alabastra with a white ground contains a single Amazon;[155] in one case (IX, 67) there is an inscription with the name Penthesileia, while the reverse contains a maenad. An Amazon beside an altar (IX, 87, second quarter of the 5th century) was also present in the black-figure series (V, 195–196), but this time there is a palm tree beside the altar as well.[156] The red-figure series also includes the presence of Thrakian elements, but now in the form of Thrakian cloaks, worn by Amazons on foot.[157]

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[150] B V, 195–196.

[151] See below, p. 408ff.

[152] For discussion of these problematic representations, see below, pp. 419–422.

[153] IX, 34–87.

[154] E.g. IX, 61 and 80.

[155] IX, 67–77.

[156] Bothmer suggests that this is a reference to the shrine of Artemis in Ephesos, although he explicitly excludes this possibility for the black-figure examples, *Amazons*, p. 160; he refers in this connection to Paus. IV, 31, 8; VII, 2, 7–8; and Tac. *Ann.* 3, 61.

Although some of these themes had been adumbrated in the early group, it is clear that the wealth of presentations of the Amazons on their own in black-figure work from ca. 550 turns them to a new purpose. If we consider which themes are associated with series A (the Heraklean Amazonomachy) and which with series B (the Trojan or generic Amazonomachy), a clear picture emerges:

correlations of Amazons on their own with Amazonomachy types A and B

Amazons	don armour	A	B	diverse
Amazons	set out on foot		B	diverse
Amazons	bring back their dead	A		diverse
Amazons	on horseback			
	Haimon group			diverse (Herakles)
	independent	A	B once	(NB Thrakians)
Amazons	lead horses		B	diverse
Amazons	with chariots			diverse

A certain regularity can be detected in the correlations of this series. “Amazons set out on foot” and “Amazons guide horses” are mainly associated with the Trojan or generic Amazonomachy. “Amazons on horseback”, on the other hand, is primarily associated with Herakles (though on one occasion it is linked with series B). “Amazons don armour” is connected with both kinds of Amazonomachies. “Amazons with chariots” is apparently such an independent theme that it displays more affinity with the theme “(war) chariots” than with the Amazonomachy.[158]

The virtually new theme “Amazons carry off their dead” is only to be found in association with the Amazonomachy of Herakles. As we saw in the discussion of Penthesileia, there is no representation of the dead Amazon queen, which is probably connected with the epic interpretation of the Amazon motif. Although fallen Amazons are to be found in the Amazonomachy of the early group, they are lacking in the small-scale scenes which focus attention on what is portrayed. In general, there are no representations of dead Amazons which bear comparison with dead male heroes. Moreover, this should be seen in the context of the tendency to avoid representation of the Amazons in a visibly physical, naked condition.[159] The new, small but intriguing group under consideration appears to flaunt these conventions in one respect, but it still avoids the representation of nudity, for the Amazons who are carried off the field of battle by their companions are fully dressed in their clothing and armour. The assumption that the Amazons being carried off are dead and not just wounded is likely enough in itself; the unusual depiction with a light grey skin colour is to be taken as a representation of a dead Amazon. All the same, this does not really contradict what has been said in connection with Penthesileia. The development of this new theme can be accommodated perfectly within the earlier framework: the Amazons are now depicted in all kinds of scenes which are customary for male warriors—and that applies to this aspect as well. Besides, the dead Amazons illustrate the victory of the male heroes. Nevertheless, the tradition still continues to exert its influence in one respect: the dead Amazons are not connected with the Trojan Amazonomachy. The epic *frisson* at the dead Amazon, transformed from a heroic opponent into a dead woman, is apparently responsible for the relegation of this theme to the battle with Herakles.[160] It goes without saying that innovation is always situated on the basis of and thereby within traditional elements.

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[157] B IX, 41 and 45. Both these alabastra and the related series known as the “Group of the Negro alabastra” are discussed below, p. 419ff.

[158] Cf. also Bothmer’s observation on V, 181, *Amazons*, p. 107, where the Amazon is dressed as a Greek charioteer with a long chiton, while she still has an “Amazonian” cap. V, 185 depicts the chariot going at full speed, as in a chariot race.

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[159] Lissarrague, discussing the iconographic themes of the carrying off of the dead in Attic black-figure vase painting, underscores the heroic nature of the dead hoplite, particularly when represented naked and/or in possession of the Boiotian shield, *L'autre guerrier*, pp. 78ff. Again, Amazons may resemble Greek male hoplites in every respect except nudity.

[160] The controversial scene in which a male warrior drags off an Amazon must be mentioned here. I have already attempted to disprove the identification as Achilles and Penthesileia in an earlier chapter (see p. 235). Now that the theme turns out to be confined to the Heraklean Amazonomachy, the following options are open: either the Herakles series has influenced the Trojan setting, so that "Trojan carries off Amazon" can be retained; or a conflation has taken place within the framework of the Herakles series, so that a male comrade at arms has been introduced. At any rate, this incongruous item should be regarded as one of the iconographical accidents of which more are to be found within the enormous Attic oeuvre.

Still, why was it possible for the representation of a dead Amazon to be associated with Herakles? In attempting to find an answer, we have to bear in mind the development of the Heraklean Amazonomachy within black-figure vase painting outlined earlier in the present chapter. Although the Heraklean Amazonomachy was a secondary development, deriving from the Trojan or generic Amazonomachy, it underwent a development of its own in black-figure work, and even came to occupy a dominant position. This process can be described both quantitatively and in terms of the influence of the pattern of Herakles and the Amazon queen on the pattern of Achilles and Penthesileia.[161] The Herakles scenes presented themselves as autonomous patterns, and, as has already been pointed out, the representation of the solitary combat of Herakles against one or more Amazons can be seen as an appropriate setting for the hero. In this new context of the Heraklean Amazonomachy, with its own special character, the theme of the dead Amazon apparently no longer raised the problems which had attached to it in the Trojan version.

This leads us to a series of questions. What was so different about the Heraklean Amazonomachy? Was no blame attached to Herakles, cultural outsider that he was, for having killed a woman? Or were the Amazons more or less assimilated to the monsters which appear as other themes of Herakles, making their death a source of relief rather than a combination of triumph and shame? Or was the paradox of the Amazons now experienced differently, and was the potential erotic element, which had to be kept in the background in the epic versions, now regarded as an extra element of excitement in the duel between Herakles and the queen? Was the perception of the Amazons itself changed, and in a way that could find expression in the Heraklean Amazonomachy, the less traditional of the two types of Amazonomachy? The lack of contemporary literary material prevents us from arriving at clearly formulated conclusions, and there is a great danger of circular argument, so that only a tentative answer can be proposed to these questions.

The first possibility can be ruled out. Herakles was certainly seen as a cultural outsider, but the critics mentioned earlier are evidence that a need was felt to adapt Herakles to the world of epic in the late seventh and sixth centuries. The hero was also assigned new cultural functions, such as that of protector of the Eleusinian mysteries.[162] Of course, it was impossible to present Herakles as a respectable citizen, and that can never have been the intention: his *persona* is based too much on his excess, both in his heroic qualities and in his comic role, for him to function as an emblem of unambiguous social success at this period. At any rate, Herakles' crimes against the human order were always viewed in a negative light. The crimes *par excellence* were the killing of human beings who were deserving of protection and respect in accordance with the norms: Iphitos, as guest[163] or as friend;[164] his own children with Megara, and the children of his friend Iphikles,[165] acts which were irrevocably regarded as an expression of insanity;[166] and the way in which he treated his womenfolk: Megara, Deianeira, Iole.[167] There is thus no indication that Herakles was allowed to transgress such ultimate norms—in the later accounts these crimes were followed by purification or punishment—and there is thus no indication that Herakles could kill women without incurring the risk of social condemnation.

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[161] See above, pp. 232–233.

The second possibility, which assumes that the Amazons acquired a more monstrous character when they were added to the company of the Wild Boar and the Lion, is evident in the eyes of DuBois and Tyrrell.[168] Following the principle of opposition and, as far as DuBois is concerned, analogy, the inhuman and thus potentially animal component of the Amazons is the inevitable result of their existence outside culture. This position is taken in the first place to be based on the well-known image of the unmarried young girl, the [parthenos], as an untamed creature, associated with wild nature. As a symbol of the [parthenos], the Amazon thereby had the character of a natural creature. This idea furthered the formation of a strong association from the analogy of the Amazons with the Persians, so that the image of the Amazons as in opposition to culture was reinforced. This series of associations is often followed as a guide to the interpretation of the Amazons in the classical era. Tyrrell and DuBois are also primarily concerned with this period, especially the fifth century, although they consider that these views were already current in the sixth century. However, it is questionable just how far the Amazons were regarded as [parthenoi] in the sixth century and whether this could lead directly to the subsequent compulsive association with the animal world. Indeed, as we shall see, the testimonia for this representation as [parthenoi] date from the last years of the sixth century. Hence it is untenable to suppose that [parthenoi] in general, or Amazons, were necessarily regarded as partaking of animality.[169] The fact that [parthenoi] and animals may display a certain analogy by virtue of their position outside the structures of the [polis], whereby both groups belong to the preserve of Artemis, enables new interpretations which draw on this marginality—but this does not make [parthenoi] and animals basic equivalents. On the other hand, right from the start the heroic aspect of the Amazons has no place in the analyses by DuBois or Tyrrell, despite the differences between them, because it is difficult to reconcile with their principles of opposition.[170] However, this aspect is the very source of the Amazon motif, including the Heraklean version.

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[162] Graf, *Eleusis*, pp. 145ff., deals with the Homeric and classical texts; J. Boardman, "Herakles, Peisistratos and Eleusis", *JHS* 95, 1975, pp. 1–12 discusses the sixth-century visual material.

[163] *Od.* XXI, 13–38.

[164] Cf. e.g. Apollod. *Bibl.* II, vi. 1–2.

[165] Cf. Apollod. *Bibl.* II, iv. 12.

[166] Already narrated in the *Kypria*, see Proclus, *Chrest.* i.; dramatized by Euripides in his *H.F.*

[167] I see no ambivalence in Soph. *Tr.* in this respect.

[168] DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons*, esp. pp. 50ff.; Tyrrell, *Amazons*, pp. 2ff. and 30–31.

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[169] Compare my remarks in connection with the Thrakian component and the maenads: representations which are situated on the edge of culture continue to form a part of that culture, even when deviation from normality and the norm is evident. When everything that is distinct from the norm is excluded from the definition of culture, the notion of culture is eroded in a forced way, and reduced to the clear-cut model which seems to be preferred by some scholars.

[170] "Tyrrell's form of structuralism, replete with polarities, codes and inversion, is not sufficiently refined to cope with the subtleties of the Amazon myths." Helen King's verdict (*TLS* 10.8.1984, p. 886) aptly sums up the problem of his interpretation; and I think that her criticisms apply, though to a lesser extent, to DuBois' analysis as well. Moreover, in frequently resorting to classical tragedy as a source, these two scholars both attach extreme importance to its polarities while ignoring the ambiguities and evocations of doubt in these texts. Loraux, *Tragic Ways*, is sensitive to these issues, and achieves a better synthesis between the principle of structural polarity and the character of the tragedies.

Assimilation to or substitution by animality must therefore be demonstrated in a cogent fashion. The new theme "Amazons carry off their dead", which is associated precisely with the Heraklean Amazonomachy, can even be seen as proof of the opposite: concern for the dead is a typical sign of human cultural behaviour. Furthermore, the equivalence of the Amazons on their own to the male Greek warriors in general contradicts a polarization in terms of a human/animal character.[171]

As for the suggestion that the Amazons as female warriors were experienced and represented differently from in the heroic epic version, this does seem to be borne out by the evidence. The unusual feature of the new group of representations of "Amazons on their own" is not so much the fact that they are treated as equivalent to male (Greek) warriors. After all, this is nothing new, because the possibility of heroic combat with these female opponents already implied such an equivalence, which was explicitly referred to in the epithet [antianeirai]. In this respect, then, the group does no more than present this equivalence in a new way. What is unusual, however, is the setting of the Amazons and their activities before and after the battle, in contrast to the preceding textual and visual presentations, where they were only presented in the situation of combat itself. This new setting ascribes the Amazons an existence outside the immediate field of vision of the Greeks. It is a location of their own, where they can prepare for battle, even under the eyes of their mothers, and to which they can retire with their dead after the fighting is over. There is a contradiction, however, for this presentation outside the Greek field of vision is effected on Greek vases, in Greek representations destined for Greek eyes. This is in conformity to a principle which we have already encountered in a different guise: the Other is (re)presented in terms which are inevitably derived from "Self".[172]

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[171] As Lissarrague has convincingly shown, Attic black-figure (and early red-figure) vase painting does not define the Greek male hoplite by contrasting him with animals, but by introducing either the world of non-Greeks or the domestic world. The latter sphere is represented by an old man, a female figure, a dog (!), or a combination of these, *L'autre guerrier*, passim. The contrast between humans and animals is played out in particular in the figure of the satyr, referring to the realm of Dionysos. This theme shows no immediate connection with the warrior code. See also the discussion of E. Vermeule's hypothesis, below p. 406.

[172] We have encountered this principle at work in the literary and visual

While the black-figure work indicated a formal autonomy of the Herakles theme *vis-à-vis* its epic background, the new series of representations indicates an autonomy of the Amazons themselves in various respects. They engage in their own activities, without the Greek warriors being directly involved, and they do so in a setting of their own. This setting acquires a visible, material identity through the addition of Thrakian elements. Bothmer is certainly right to suppose that mounted Amazons reminded the Greeks of Thrakian horsemen, which many scholars assume to have been present in Athens at this time,[173] and to have influenced their representation as Thrakians, but the association cannot be explained entirely in terms of this historical referent any more than was the case with the literary variant. There were no Amazons on horseback in Athens, and an active mental process is required to select elements from reality and transfer them to fictive figures. Moreover, the two red-figure illustrations of Amazons with Thrakian cloaks indicate that the Thrakian aspect could be treated as an independent item at the same time as the late black-figure work, without the representation of horses as a necessary precondition. If we assume that the epic attribution of a Thrakian character to the Amazons, or at any rate to Penthesileia, was generally known, then this visual assimilation had already been anticipated in the narrative arts. In the sixth-century visual material, then, the autonomy of the Amazons and the need it expresses to attribute the Amazons a more specific identity are the major preconditions for this transfer of attributes.

The Thrakian component in the post-550 black-figure group is confined to the theme "Amazons on horseback". This series is predominantly associated with the theme of "Herakles", and only once with the Trojan Amazonomachy (series B), but this should not be taken to mean that Herakles' combat was now associated with Thrake. The location of Herakles' feat is nowhere indicated in the visual material, and it seems most sensible to imagine it for the time being as belonging somewhere in "mythical

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record in the case of Penthesileia's qualification as "of Thrakian [genos]" and the interpretation of the Amazon motif on the basis of this "Thrakian" component.

[173] Bothmer, *Amazons*, pp. 104–105; Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier*, Ch. VIII, esp. pp. 210ff.

space". The Thrakian element in the Amazons can be regarded in the first instance as an indication of their separate identity, which is also indicated in a different manner in the black-figure work. This general process can be called the "barbarization" of the Amazons, as these women are increasingly clad in costumes which are derived from non-Greek cultures.

Before examining this "barbarization" in more detail, however, we still have to deal with the last of the possibilities suggested above. Could the feminine character of the Amazons be brought more to the surface in this material, so that the Amazon motif was eroticized in a more explicit fashion? E. Vermeule has collected some evidence which certainly does make this suggestion attractive. There are already some passages in the Homeric epic in which the struggle is expressed in erotic imagery. Sometimes it presents the opponent as female, and thus weaker,[174] like the animal which falls prey to the hunter.[175] In this connection, she discusses the connection between the use of the verbs [damazo] and [damnèmi], which can refer to the taming of an animal, the rape of a woman, and the killing of a man.[176] The warrior makes use of such language to anticipate the inevitability of his victory. The crucial difference with the Amazon paradox is that these metaphors represent a male opponent as a woman engaged in a sexual act, so that an equivalence is assumed between the sexual penetration of a woman by a penis and the penetration of a man by a weapon.[177] What does not take place is the representation of the killing of a woman through penetration by a weapon in the context of heroic battle.[178] We have already discussed this taboo extensively in the case of Penthesileia. Still, it is only obvious to assume that the ambiguous association of sexuality with violent death could be utilized *par excellence* in the Amazon motif. In the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia, the core of the motif lay precisely in the maintenance of the dividing line between male and female, and between [eroos] and violent killing. The black-figure work, on the other hand, sometimes reveals a deliberate assimilation of Herakles' duel with an Amazon to an erotic scene with a satyr and maenad.[179] Here too, it should be emphasized that these—rare—iconographical allusions occur in the duel of Herakles, and are absent from the duel between Achilles and Penthesileia. More in particular, these allusions suggest an affinity between Amazons and maenads as women who live in a sphere of their own, inaccessible to men or to the power of [eroos]. Thus even within the more flexible Heraklean context, the representation of the Amazon exemplifies her femininity while retaining the original paradox. She is a female, but one not to be penetrated by the phallus but by the sword.[180]

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[174] See too the discussion of [eroos] as a force which can transform the lover into a victim of the loved one (p. 287ff). This potential aspect of [eroos] may bring about a hostile attitude in the lover with regard to the loved one, encourage him to sublimate the undermining force of [eroos], and to turn it into aggression against the object. See too Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire*, esp. pp. 50, 54ff. and ch. 6.

[175] Vermeule, *Aspects of Death*, p. 101. Cf. *Il.* XVII, 142; XI, 385; V, 143; XV, 510.

[176] Vermeule, *Aspects of Death*, pp. 101–102.

[177] Vermeule, *Aspects of Death*, p. 101. Cf. *Il.* V, 143; V, 646, 653. Cf. also above, p. 284ff.

[178] See the arguments advanced in ch. III. The killing of a woman is either an act endowed with strong ritual connotations, or simple murder; for discussion of these different aspects see Loraux, *Tragic Ways*, and Maaskant, "The Stuff of which Greek Heroines are Made".

The world of the Amazons

In the earliest archaeological material, the Amazons appear wearing elements of hoplite armour: a helmet, a round shield, a sword and a spear. In the early black-figure group the armour is often completed with greaves, and in a few cases the Amazons wear a breastplate. In general, the Amazons are portrayed in black-figure as Greek hoplites; all that distinguishes them as female warriors is the whiteness of their skin. At the same time, however, a tendency can be discerned in this early group which increases in quantity in the course of the black-figure and red-figure work as well as acquiring a more detailed elaboration. This tendency can be labelled "barbarization": the borrowing of visual elements of clothing or armour from non-Greek cultures. The long dress which characterized the female character of the Amazon in the early material down to the alabastron **[no. 3]** disappears from sight. In its place we find the white skin used in black-figure work for the same purpose, as well as the introduction of a new fashion in Amazon clothing. This is the short tunic fastened with a girdle, which distinguishes the Amazons from the Greeks, who wear a chiton and breastplate or are naked.[181] Penthesileia is depicted wearing this tunic on the shield-strap reliefs illustrating her duel with Achilles. The clothing of the Amazons in this early black-figure work often has a decorative border, where exotic elements such as griffins and sphinxes are sometimes to be seen.[182] There are other elements which are used to lend the clothing of the Amazons an unusual look: animal skins, especially feline skins (leopard and lion),[183] fur caps, earrings and a striped tunica,[184] helmets with bull's ears and a bull's tail.[185]

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[179] Vermeule, *Aspects of Death*, p. 102, figs. 18 and 19.

[180] It is of crucial importance here that satyrs are often depicted assaulting maenads with an obvious sexual aim, but that "the satyrs never attain their desires; the sexual relationship between satyrs and maenads appears to be impossible, whether the maenads escape or simply lie there like inanimate bodies, to be seen but never possessed. Maenads are inviolable. [. . .] In the Attic repertory, during the period under consideration (from 570 to 470), the figure of Eros is totally absent from the satyr's world. The two realms do not intersect." F. Lissarrague, "The Sexual Life of Satyrs", in Halperin, *Before Sexuality*, pp. 53–81, quoted pp. 63 and 66.

This unusual dress becomes an increasingly common feature of Amazonomachies in black-figure work from ca. 550. In particular, we find as a standard attribute of the Amazons in this group a cap which tapers to a firm point on top or behind, and which is fitted with long pendant flaps on either side of the head. There are also other elements of foreign dress, such as trousers and a short jacket, which give the Amazons an exotic appearance.[186] This trend is continued in the subsequent red-figure work, except that the decoration on the combination of trousers and jacket is much more elaborate. The new technique made it possible to indicate attractive details and distinctive decorations.

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[181] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 13. This tunic is generally slightly longer than a chiton.

[182] For a selection see B II, 42, 44, 45, 50.

[183] B II, 11, 26, 33, 35, 37 (series A, Herakles); II 53 (foreign scene) II, 64, 64bis (series B, Trojan Amazonomachy).

[184] B II, 26.

[185] B II, 3 and 63.

[186] The following examples illustrate the variation. In the Herakles Amazonomachy, section III, ear-rings (1), hat with border (6), axe, two pointed caps (10bis), pointed cap, long dress with girdle (35), cap, trousers, jacket (38); trousers and jacket (103), trousers (245, 252), trousers and jacket (255), an entire series with female archers wearing pointed caps and "Phrygian" caps with a rumpled point (III, G, e). In the Trojan or generic Amazonomachy, section IV: Penthesileia in leopard skin (2; Exekias), trousers and jacket, on horseback (95); on horseback, cap (108; 113), cap, trousers and jacket, on horseback (125).

The imaginative devising of the full barbarian Amazon costume has been attributed to Euphronios (fl. ca. 515–500), but Bothmer correctly points out that the phenomenon occurs much earlier, though in a simpler form.[187] This "costume" refers to a combination of long trousers and a jacket, sometimes fastened with a girdle. It is usually worn with a cap, usually a tall pointed cap, sometimes a "Phrygian" cap with a rumpled point.[188] The cap is also found without the rest of the costume: Bothmer considered the first example of a "Phrygian" cap to be that on alabastron **[no. 3]**, although I consider that a helmet is intended there. The caps are frequent in black-figure work after ca. 550. The first complete costume apparently occurs only once in the early group,[189] but is frequent after ca. 550. Bothmer and most other archaeologists refer to this costume simply as an "oriental costume", and the cap is usually referred to as an "oriental cap".

There are reasons to doubt the accuracy of this label in the light of a number of good studies of this costume, which is not confined to the Amazons alone.[190] In particular, Shapiro's article

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[187] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 136.

[188] The pointed cap is sometimes fitted with narrow, hanging side-pieces, and there is some variation in detail in representations of the "Phrygian" cap. In this respect, both kinds can be distinguished from the reasonably consistent portrayal of Persian caps in the fifth-century Attic archaeological record; see A. Bovon, "La représentation des guerriers Perses et la notion de barbare dans la 1re moitié du Ve siècle", *BCH* 87, 1963, pp. 579–602.

[189] B II, 6, *Amazons*, p. 17. It is difficult to make out the details of this costume on the photograph in Bothmer, *Amazons*, and on that in *CVA* III H d pl. 5, 4/12, as the Amazon in question is situated virtually beneath the handle. Shapiro, who also seems to have had to rely on the photograph in *CVA*, likewise notes that this early Amazon in this costume is not clearly visible, "Amazons", p. 111, n. 38.

[190] M.F. Vos, *Scythian Archers in Archaic Attic Vase-Painting*, Groningen 1963 (diss. Utrecht 1963); Shapiro, "Amazons, Thracians and Scythians"; Neils, "The Group of the Negro Alabastra"; Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier*; and M.V. Scrzhinskaya, "Heroes of Cimmerian and Scythian Legends in Greek Poetry and Vase Paintings, Seventh and Sixth Centuries B.C." (in Russian), in *VDI* 179, 1986, pp. 84–95 (the author's name is transcribed as Skrzinskaja in *APh*). I am very grateful to K. Veraart for the translation of this article; the rather impressionistic ideas of the author, who follows Friedrich Engels, should be compared with e.g. R. Rolle, "Oiorpata", *Beiträge zur Archäologie Nordwest-*

"Amazons, Thracians and Skythians" is entirely convincing; I shall make considerable use of it as a point of reference as it also presents my own interpretation of these representations in a satisfactory way. Vos' monograph *Scythian Archers* laid the foundation for the tracking down and interpretation of this material because the affinity between the Skythian archers whom she has studied and the Amazons dressed as Skythian archers is not a fortuitous one.

The main argument of these studies is evident from their titles: the sixth-century costume of the Amazons is not oriental, but Northern. The continuous references to "oriental" dress can only be understood as the result of a preoccupation with the strife between Greeks and Persians, which many have taken to form the iconological link running through the Amazonomachies in fifth-century Athens. The merits and demerits of this argument will be left aside for present purposes.[191] At any rate, I am as convinced as Shapiro[192] that the image of this classical period and even of later periods has been projected backwards by the critics onto the sixth-century representations. An unprejudiced view of the material, however, points in another (cardinal) direction. The combination of trousers and a jacket was the customary dress of horse-riding peoples who lived in a cold climate. This is certainly the case for the Medes and the Persians, but it is equally true of the peoples of Southern Russia. Moreover, it is perhaps worthwhile to point out that, in the worldview of Hekataios and Herodotos, the Thrakians and Skythians, like the mainland Greeks, belonged to the European continent, while the Persians belonged to Asia. The North and the East were thus regarded by the Greeks as each belonging to a different continent.

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deutschlands und Mitteleuropas, Th. Krüger and H.G. Stephan, eds. Hildesheim 1980, pp. 275–294, an article which I received through the good graces of Bianca Röhrig in Münster. For the background to this material see also W. Raeck, *Zum Barbarenbild in der Kunst Athens im 6. und 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Bonn 1981, and over the local developments M. Ebert, *Südrussland im Altertum*, Bonn/Leipzig 1921, and Kocybala, *Greek Colonization*; like Rolle, the investigations of the latter scholars also incorporate the results of research published in the Slavonic languages.

[191] Following the conclusions of Bovon, "La représentation des guerriers Perses", I prefer to assume for the time being that the representation of the battle with the Persians are based on the Amazonomachy, not vice versa.

[192] Shapiro, "Amazons", pp. 105–106.

The first appearance of Skythian dress in our sources is in vase painting.[193] The earliest representations, dating from ca. 570 to ca. 540, are of male archers who are dressed like Greek hoplites except for the presence of the typical pointed cap. The full costumes with trousers, jacket and cap do not make their appearance until after 530.[194] In red-figure work dating from ca. 530 to ca. 460, in which women are no longer differentiated by a white skin, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish these male archers from Amazons because the costumes of the two groups are virtually the same.[195] The development of the costume of the Amazons, who wear either hoplite armour or tunics, more or less follows that of the dress of the male figures.[196] The period in which this Northern costume and a more elaborate working out of the details reaches a peak is in the last decennia of the sixth century. Vos attributes this to the actual presence of Skythians in Athens, by analogy with the Thrakian auxiliaries whom Peisistratos had introduced to the city. Moreover, the figures in this Northern costume are always archers, and the same is true for the majority of the Amazons, while the literary testimonia indicate that Greek archers were not sent into battle before 480; the bow was reserved for hunting before that date. The male archers are always fighting on the Greek side, so they must be allies.[197] Finally, the campaign of Dareios against Skythia in ca. 514–513 is supposed to explain why the Skythian troops were recalled home, and the presence of Ionians in this campaign put an end to the cordial relations between Greeks and Skythians. The trade contacts with Skythia were abruptly broken off around 510.[198]

Shapiro has little to add to Vos' iconographical treatment, but he disagrees with the interpretation. There are no testimonia for the presence of Skythians in Athens before the middle of the fifth century, and the familiarity of the Athenians with Skythian dress can be explained more easily from trade contacts. At the time of the Peisistratids Athens had a trading post in Sigeion, on the south coast of the Euxine (Black Sea), on the route to Skythian territory.[199] In view of the possibility that such impressions are the foundation for familiarity with and representations of Skythian figures, it is therefore necessary to look briefly at the Greek presence in Southern Russia.

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[193] The following summary of these developments is mainly based on Vos, *Scythian Archers*.

[194] Vos, *Scythian Archers*, pp. 40 and 43.

[195] Vos, *Scythian Archers*, p. 26.

[196] Bothmer detected the first Amazon in a complete suit with trousers in the early group (II, 6), where the only special marker of the Skythians is the pointed cap. In this case, the development of the Amazons is slightly earlier.

[197] Vos, *Scythian Archers*, pp. 1ff.

[198] Vos, *Scythian Archers*, pp. 86–87.

Kocybala explains why the history of the pre-Greek settlement of the South Russian steppe is rather vague. The Skythians do not appear in the early finds, but they must have arrived in this area towards the end of the seventh century. There was no sedentary settlement: it was therefore relatively easy for the first Greeks to settle there, but trade could not have been a strong motive.[200] The archaeological record attests a Greek presence in this area around the middle of the seventh century, but the epic sources do not provide any clear indications. Another piece of evidence is the journey of Aristeas of Prokonnesos, which can lay some claim to historicity; the preferred dating for this journey is in the second half of the seventh century rather than the Herodotean dating around 675–650.[201] Kocybala assumes that the actual settlements were preceded by activities in the form of incidental journeys, which enabled some information on the region to seep through to the Greek world. The following stage consisted of agricultural settlements, fishery and subsequent trade (wine, for instance, was exported to Greece from this area). The first documented settlements are Berezan (Borysthenes?) in the last quarter of the seventh century, Olbia at the end of the seventh or beginning of the sixth century, Pantikapaion in the first quarter of the sixth, and the more substantial colonization in the second half of the sixth century. Imports of Attic black-figure work can be found from the second quarter of the sixth century, but the majority of products are from Eastern Greece. It was not until the late sixth century that Attika became a significant trading partner with the region.[202] This process corresponds to the well-known developments in colonization, in which the Eastern Greeks played by far the most important role with the aim of founding new cities, followed in the second instance by Athens in its search for potential retail markets. The Athenians, particularly the Peisistratids, had an important stake in Thrake, but the connections with Skythia were much less close.

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[199] Shapiro, "Thracians", p. 112.

[200] Kocybala, *Greek Colonization*, pp. 75–90.

[201] Kocybala, *Greek Colonization*, pp. 95–104; cf. Bolton, *Aristeas*, on this journey, the date, and its consequences for gaining knowledge about the North; and Burkert, "Herodot als Historiker", ca. 600 B.C.

[202] Kocybala, *Greek Colonization*, pp. 361–370.

This background goes a long way to explaining the addition of Skythian elements in the vase paintings. Between 575 and 550 we find a few isolated elements: ear-rings, pointed caps, a garment with a border decorated with sphinxes, Skythian archers. In the large-scale battle scenes after 550, both black-figure and (later) red-figure, it is never the case that all the Amazons are dressed as barbarians, but only a few of them. From ca. 530 the complete Skythian outfit of jacket and trousers can be clearly distinguished from Thrakian or other attributes, but strict consistency is hard to find. The vase paintings from this period present us with elements derived from reality which have been introduced into an imaginary setting. It is precisely the arbitrary associations determining the choice of attributes and decoration which remind one of the isolated details which survive from travellers' reports. The more intense trading contacts with Skythia in the last decennia of the sixth century, and the possible occasional presence of Skythians in Athens as a result,[203] led to increased precision in the representations, but the preceding period was one in which information was a good deal more vague.

The hypothesis that this interest is to be sought in the narrative sphere rather than in actual observations by Attic vase painters finds tentative support in a representation on the early black-figure François vase, dated to around 570. One of the many scenes on this vase is of the Kalydonian boar hunt. The hunters include not only the figures of Meleagros, Atalante and Melanios, but also three archers with striking names: Eutimachos, Kimerios and Toxamis. The name Toxamis has a strong Skythian ring to it,[204] and we are bound to regard the name Kimerios as a reference to the Kimmerians, who invaded the Northern and

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[203] Cf. Shapiro, Amazons", p. 112 and n. 44 on the statue of a Skythian horseman, found in Athens, which can be regarded as an indication of this occasional presence.

[204] The name Toxaris is known from later sources, Luc. *Skyth.*, 1. On these names, Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier*, pp. 110–111.

Western parts of Asia Minor between the end of the eighth century and the beginning of the seventh. This indicates the existence of an Eastern Greek source for the presence of a "Kimmerian" and a "Skythian" in a Greek heroic enterprise. Scrzhinskaya considers that such figures also featured as heroes in Eastern Greek stories, particularly epic, in view of the impression which these people had left behind there as horsemen and archers.[205] This is probably going too far, but it is certainly not impossible that they played a role in narratives in one way or another. As we saw in the case of the Thrakians, these peoples were esteemed for their qualities as rapid warriors on horseback and archers. This made them suitable symbols of a life-style which aroused both repugnance and respect for its non-Greek character.[206] The likelihood that this is an Eastern Greek tradition, rather than a continental Greek, let alone Attic, one is evident from the location of the peoples in question, apart from the fact that Ionian epic was dominant in this period.[207]

The affinity of these Skythian male archers with the Amazons can be found on B II, 39, a vase by the same painter as the François vase, Kleitias,[208] so that in this respect the connection between the two categories can be localized. One of the Amazons on B II, 39 is called Skyleia. This name may be derived from [skulax], young animal or puppy, but Scrzhinskaya takes it to be a derivation from Skyles, a Skythian king known from

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[205] Scrzhinskaya, "Heroes of Cimmerian and Scythian Legends", p. 87.

[206] Cf. Hartog, *Le miroir*, and E. Lévy, "Les origines du mirage scythe", *Ktema* 6, 1981, pp. 57–68. Of course, the most extensive collection of material on this view of non-Greeks is to be found in Herodotos. Respect for the Skythians must have received an unmistakeable impulse from the success of these nomads in resisting Dareios' expedition into their country. In this respect Herodotos' account can be seen to be coloured by a fifth-century perspective. Lévy, however, traces the influences of the, admittedly vague, references in the Homeric epics, where peoples associated with the Skythians, especially the Abioi, are described as the most just, *Il.* XIII, 3–7, and other testimonia, Lévy, "Les origines", pp. 58ff. The tradition on the wisdom of the Skythian Anacharsis must certainly predate the fifth century, while the Skythians are regularly qualified as [eunomoi]. According to Lévy, the negative connotations of the barbarian character of the Skythians are not to be found before 500.

[207] The first name, Eutimachos, is pure Greek, but Scrzhinskaya explains it as the translation of a Lydian name, "Heroes", p. 90. Though this interpretation is not backed up by a convincing argument, it is relevant for present purposes that Eutimachos is represented wearing a tall pointed cap.

[208] Bothmer, *Amazons*, p. 24; cf. also Scrzhinskaya, "Heroes", pp. 90–91.

Herodotos. Like his more famous countryman Anacharsis, this Skyles made the transition from one culture to another, but in the end his acculturation to the Greek world led to his downfall.[209] Anacharsis and his journey to Kyzikos are usually dated to the middle of the sixth century;[210] at any rate, they can be set before Dareios' invasion of Skythia, and so can Skyles' stay among the Greeks in Borysthenes a few years later, if they are in fact historical events at all. In any case, we are here dealing with stories which apparently circulated in their earliest forms among the Greeks who lived around the Black Sea, both in the Northern colonies themselves and in the Eastern Greek cities where this population came from and which maintained contact with their colonies. The point of these stories, which Herodotos must have heard on the spot,[211] is the sharp cultural distinction between Skythian and Greek mores and the problems with which the Skythians would be faced if they were to accept elements of Greek culture. This aspect is ignored in Hartog's study of Herodotos on Skythia,[212] where the emphasis is constantly on the *Greek* aspect, the need to construct the Other and the representations by which it is expressed. Hartog thus applies the cultural prohibition on overstepping these boundaries to the Greeks themselves in the first instance, in an inversion of Herodotos' emphasis on their primary application to the Skythians. There is no need to adopt such a one-sided view: such processes are generally mutual, and it is difficult to deny the presence of an authentic Skythian element in the stories which Herodotos relates.[213] At any rate, the name Skyleia, if it is taken to be a feminine version of Skyles,[214] matches the series of feminized male names.

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[209] Hdt. IV, 76–80, Skyles IV, 78–80. Scrzhinskaya, "Heroes", p. 91. Cf. Hartog, *Le miroir*, pp. 82ff.

[210] Lévy, "Les origines", pp. 67–68 and passim.

[211] This is implied by his report of a later story about Anacharsis which he heard from the Lakedaimonians but refuses to countenance, in contrast to the previously mentioned versions, IV 77.

[212] Hartog, *Le miroir*, passim.

[213] Cf. e.g. the various accounts of the origin of the Skythians, where we can still detect distinct Greek and Skythian versions, Hdt. IV, 5–15. For a similar position, see Burkert, "Herodot als Historiker fremder Religionen".

[214] The vase in question, which belongs to the early group, is certainly very early to be brought in connection with the legendary Skyles, but the possibility cannot be excluded. The impossibility of dating Herodotos' stories of the Skythian kings can be used as an argument to attack or defend the derivation.

The most likely source is a narrative one, whether it is to be located in Eastern Greece or among the Greek inhabitants of the Northern coast of the Black Sea.

We have seen how the Skythian Amazons make their appearance alongside the male archers of the North. Similarly, once Thrakian horsemen begin to appear in black-figure work, from ca. 530/525,[215] the Amazons become Thrakian. In both cases the barbarization of the Amazons follows the same pattern as the representation of the corresponding male barbarians in vase painting. Nevertheless, there are differences between the Skythian and Thrakian representations. While the Skythian costume first appears in Amazonomachies, the theme of Thrake is particularly conspicuous in the series of "Amazons on their own". In the series "Amazons lead their horses", which is mainly combined with the Trojan Amazonomachy on the reverse, the Amazons are generally equipped as hoplites, though some of them wear the Northern cap and a few archers can be seen as well. However, three Amazons have a pelta, the typically Thrakian shield.[216] Peltae are also to be found in a scene of Amazons carrying off one of their dead.[217] The Thrakian cloaks, which are even worn by Amazons on foot in later examples, have already been mentioned; Shapiro points out, however, that the genuine Thrakian cap is worn by male Thrakians, but never by Amazons.[218]

If we now attempt to draw some very tentative conclusions about the barbarization of the Amazons, it would appear that, if the qualification "of Thrakian [genos]" already formed a part of the epic story of Penthesileia, as may be surmised from Proclus' summary of the *Aithiopis*, then it is this narrative tradition which laid the basis for the tendency to represent the Amazons as non-Greek Others. In that case, the motif of Penthesileia's origin is in line with the epic view of Thrake, later elaborated—in view of the likely date of this version—with perceptions from the second half of the seventh century. Analysis of the visual record, however, indicates a different origin for the barbarization of the Amazons. The representations of Amazons in non-Greek costume are Attic, they begin in the second quarter of the sixth century, and they betray, not a Thrakian element, but a Skythian one. The Thrakian component in representations does not begin until almost fifty years later, corresponding to the introduction of Thrakian horsemen in vase painting. One Thrakian attribute is exceptional in this respect: the dressing of the Amazons in the skin of a leopard or of some other animal, which evokes Thrake through the themes of "wildness" and "maenadism", begins in the same early group which contains the Skythian pointed caps and, in all likelihood, the Northern combination of jacket and trousers as well. The animal skins are more of an allusion than a specific item of clothing like the Thrakian cloaks. The Skythian elements run parallel to the appearance of archers, the Thrakian elements are clearly connected, though not exclusively so, with the use of horses. Apart from this increasing barbarization in sixth-century vase painting, the Amazons continue to be represented as female Greek hoplites, both in their costume, their mode of fighting and their activities outside the Amazonomachy. This principle—the representation of the Amazons as Greeks—even applies to the possession of horses, for although this could be closely associated with Thrake, it has a closer parallel in the activities of Greek horsemen.

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[215] Shapiro, "Amazons", p. 107.

[216] Best, *Thracian Peltasts*, pp. 3–16; cf. Shapiro, "Amazons", p. 107; Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier*, Ch. VII.

[217] B V, 59; Shapiro, "Amazons", p. 107.

[218] Shapiro, "Amazons", p. 107.

The fact that the Thrakian element was initially indicated by the animal skins, and was only later elaborated when genuine Thrakians were to be seen in Athens, shows that barbarization is in the first place an expression of an imaginary world of the Greeks.[219] Eye-witness observation, no matter how keenly it was used, was subsequent and secondary to this work of the Greek imagination. As for the Skythian elements, I have followed Shapiro in connecting them with stories, reports by third parties in the form of travel accounts following in the wake of the emerging trade relations, of Eastern Greek traditions of a similar nature. Descriptions of typical aspects of Skythian life, such as dress—the striking pointed cap, jacket and trousers—and mode of fighting—the omnipresent bow—seem the most likely source for the corresponding representations on Attic vases. The presence of Skythians in Athens between ca. 530 and 510 is much less securely attested than that of Thrakians, but their incidental presence cannot be ruled out entirely. In this case too, a more elaborate representation, probably resulting from first-hand experience, comes on the heels of the initial, associative attributes.

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[219] Lissarrague, in his analysis of the Skythian archer as a sign of the non-hoplite, discusses the views and values attached by the Greeks to archers and the use of the bow; *L'autre guerrier*, Ch. I. The ambivalence is clear: while the archer takes second place to the normative hoplite, the Greeks respected good archers in both legend and reality. Lissarrague then focuses on the role of archery in the *imaginaire*. His conclusions on this point coincide with mine, but the choice of Skythia as the (imaginary) emblem of this Other archer would seem to require some explanation too, especially as the Amazons were assigned a dwelling place there as well.

The development of this visual motif as a whole suggests that, in the early sixth century, elements which we now distinguish as "Thrakian" or "Skythian" were regarded as mutually interchangeable signs of a "barbarian, Northern origin". Form followed function; the tentative, incidental attributes gave the Amazons an identity. While the formula in an epic context represented the Amazons as the Other on a basis which would nowadays be called psychological—as an extrapolation of conflicting representations of one's own identity as a male warrior—, the barbarization which is set in motion from the seventh century on shows how this image could be inserted into a geographical or ethnographical framework. We can probably attribute two results to this change. First, the view of the Amazons as a Northern people met the need to find out who the indeterminate Amazons were and to give them an identifiable form. Second, by placing the Amazons within the framework of "encyclopaedic" knowledge, the extremely ambiguous, instable and disruptive image of these female warriors could be given a more or less firm foundation.[220] By anchoring the image of the Amazons in the ethnographical concept of the Other, it was now possible to explore the more hidden aspect of the Amazons, their femininity, in more detail. If these assumptions about the function of barbarization are correct, we would expect to find both a portrayal of the Amazons as barbarian Others and a more explicit presentation of their character as women in the course of the sixth century and subsequently. The development of the Amazonology, following the visual representation of the Amazons as a Northern people, is a clear illustration of the first point. It also encompasses the second once it explicitly tackles the problem of procreation and the physical existence of Amazons. A first response to the question of whether the Amazons were increasingly viewed as women has been provided by the analysis of Herakles' Amazonomachy. However, we shall presently see that, outside the framework of the Amazonomachy as well, the Amazons increasingly acquired a clear profile as female beings.

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[220] Compare my discussion of the symbolic function and role of encyclopaedic knowledge in relation to the work of Sperber, above, p. 74.

The deployment of the theme "Thrake" in that of "Amazons on their own" recurs in an interesting sequel to these motifs. Neils has demonstrated that a series of representations from the first decennia of the fifth century, known as the "Group of the Negro Alabastra", derives from the Amazon alabastra which begin in the last decennia of the sixth century.[221] The two peoples are associated through their participation in the Trojan War, in which the negroes stand for Memnon's Aithiopian people. The transfer of iconographical motifs has been carried through to such an extent that the negroes wear Thrakian cloaks or carry a pelta on some items.[222] In the majority of these scenes the negroes are wearing the combination of jacket and trousers, and in one case even the Skythian cap makes an appearance as well.[223] The Amazons provide the connecting link; these negroes are clad in Northern dress.[224] The first steps in the direction of this transfer can be found in the sixth century.[225]

The relation between the Negro alabastra and the Amazon representations can also be seen in another motif which recurs in both themes. Two "Amazons on their own", dating from the last decennia of the sixth century, are situated beside an altar: one is clad as an Amazon in Northern dress, the other is dressed as a hoplite.[226] We should also include the strange representation of four serpent nymphs, one of whom recalls an Amazon with her pelta, "oriental" (i.e. Northern) cap, and spear.[227] This group of controversial cases also includes a scene of an Amazon kneeling in front of an altar, with a palm tree to one side.[228] Both palm trees and altars (sometimes replaced by stools)[229] are also very common on the Amazon alabastra. Palm trees are a regular feature of the Negro alabastra too. Finally, another palm tree is to be found associated with two Thrakian figures kneeling in front of an altar on a red-figure oenochoe from ca. 510.[230] Neither the Thrakians nor the negroes correspond to the theme "Ephesos". The motif of "palm tree and altar" can thus hardly be taken to refer to the shrine of the Amazons in Ephesos, which was relevant to neither the Thrakians nor the negroes. However, palm trees can be taken to refer to a distant country—usually understood as the East, as Neils assumes, though this is not always the case. The Aithiopians were known to live on the border of the world, at the Ocean's edge,[231] while the Thrakians were based in the North. It is precisely in connection with the Amazons, however, that the combination of altar and palm tree provides a specific additional, more abstract connotation, which is extremely illuminating as regards changes in the Amazon motif.

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[221] Neils, "The Group of the Negro Alabastra".

[222] Neils nos. 7 and 8: cloaks; nos. 36–39: peltae.

[223] Neils no. 41: cap; jacket and trousers: in virtually all cases.

[224] Neils, "The Group", p. 22 and passim refers to "Asiatics", although she fails to explain why the negroes should be taken to be Asiatic.

[225] In the work of the Swing Painter; Neils, "The Group", p. 22.

[226] B V, 195 and 196. Bothmer considers that the altar is intended for a pre-combat sacrifice, *Amazons*, p. 109.

[227] B V, 198.

C. Sourvinou-Inwood has demonstrated that the motif of altar and palm tree may refer to the preserve of Artemis as the goddess of nature and protectress of [parthenoi].[232] The motif is found on alabastra, it should be noted—perfume bottles which were primarily associated with the preparations for marriage because of their cosmetic use by women. Moreover, it is found in combination with motifs such as a stool, which refer to the domestic sphere. The motif can therefore be connected with the erotic pursuit of the [parthenos], her "abduction" from the preserve of Artemis, and her marriage. The motif of "altar and palm tree" displays a double *pars pro toto* reference: the representation of the altar of Artemis stands for a shrine of the goddess, which in turn stands for the deity's domain.[233] The abduction of the [parthenos] to inaugurate the wedding was equivalent to her abduction from the precinct of the shrine of Artemis in Brauron, and to the detachment of the [parthenos] from the chorus of young girls and from the ritual setting of the [arkteia]. The Amazons on the alabastra which are found near an altar, often seeking protection, are thereby indicated as [parthenoi]: the danger that menaces them is not the arrival of a belligerent enemy, but the threat of an erotic abduction. This interpretation finds confirmation in the fact that the altar is replaced by a stool on some of the Amazon alabastra.[234] The motif is therefore not connected with the shrine in Ephesos, as Bothmer claimed; it is an explicitly Attic motif, associated with the rites of Artemis in Brauron. The motif "altar with palm tree" refers not only to the shrine of Artemis in a literal way, but also to the domain over which she holds sway. Sourvinou therefore concludes that this association of Artemis with nature is a particularly important element in the representation in the specific case of the Amazons. It creates an affinity between Amazons and other "wild women"—maenads.[235] This is not the first time that we have come across this affinity, but its consequences are more far-reaching in the case of the alabastra series. Other strange figures, viz. negroes, are drawn into this cluster of associations and connotations, beginning with erotic abduction and ending in the domain of wild nature on the border of culture, with the Amazons functioning as a *trait d'union.* The motif of altar and palm tree, like the Thrakian costume, becomes an attribute of the negroes, so that in general the motif represents the cultural marginality of these Others.[236]

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[228] B IX, 87; red-figure, second quarter fifth century.

[229] B IX, 67–77. Bothmer associated the theme "Ephesos" with these cases.

[230] Beazley, *ARV* 2, p. 156, no. 54; Best, *Thracian Peltasts*, p. 14.

[231] *Od.* I, 22ff., cf. IV 84, V 282; and *Il.* I, 423; XXIII, 206. On this location, see R. Lonis, "Les trois approches de l'Ethiopien par l'opinion gréco-romaine", *Ktema* 6, 1981, pp. 69–87.

[232] C. Sourvinou-Inwood, "Altars with Palm-trees, Palm-trees and Parthenoi", *BICS* 32, 1985, pp. 125–146 (reissued as a triptych with two other related articles in C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *"Reading" Greek Culture. Texts and Images, Rituals and Myths*, Oxford 1991, part II: Images of Athenian Maidens).

Sourvinou-Inwood's conclusions apply above all to the visual material from the fifth century, the period from which the majority of the Amazon and Negro alabastra date, as well as related series of alabastra which feature in her discussion. Nevertheless, this visual material begins in the late archaic group of black-figure and red-figure work towards the end of the sixth century.[237] Moreover, the material from this period includes the group of problematical cases, some of which can now be considered in more detail. The two Amazons beside an altar (B V, 195–196) can be connected with the representations on the alabastra. The scene of four women dressed as Amazons and engaged in some kind of dance (V, 200), can also be accommodated to the theme of the [parthenos] and her marriage.[238] The same applies to the four serpent nymphs, one dressed as an Amazon, one with a krater, one with a drinking cup and one with a flute: the krater and cup are among the objects associated with a wedding, the flute can be connected with the cult of Artemis Brauronia,[239] and the Amazon costume requires no further discussion here.[240]

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[233] Sourvinou-Inwood, "Altars with Palm-trees", pp. 127ff.

[234] Sourvinou-Inwood, "Altars with Palm-trees", pp. 128–134.

[235] Sourvinou-Inwood, "Altars with Palm-trees", pp. 131–132.

[236] Ibidem. On pp. 133ff. Sourvinou-Inwood deals with the associations of the Amazons with "Oriental foreign warriors", especially after the Persian Wars. I am unable to follow her in this respect, because I have increasing doubts about the stringency of this analogy, but treatment of this problem would exceed the bounds of the present study. Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier*, pp. 177ff., connects the theme under discussion here with the marginality of [epheboi].

At any rate, there is a certain continuity in the visual record which enables us to trace the motif of the Amazons as [parthenoi] back to the last decennia of the sixth century. Going back further still, we can detect a development which commences in the second quarter of the sixth century which connects the Amazons with the (Northern) exotica, while from ca. 550 the femininity of the Amazons also begins to acquire greater prominence than before. Through the association with maenads, this femininity is expressed in scenes of the duel between Herakles and an Amazon. The exotic series continues, but in the last decennia of the sixth century the feminine and also erotic factors come to the fore in the [parthenoi] representation. The gradual transformation into explicitly feminine beings in the last decennia of the sixth century marks a fundamental shift in the representation of the Amazons by comparison with the epic version.

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[237] See above, p. 398.

[238] Perhaps the fruits which Bothmer saw in the branches of the trees are really flowers.

[239] Sourvinou-Inwood, "Altars", pp. 129–130.

[240] The significance of the serpent nymphs remains puzzling. On the role of snakes in the Athenian Thesmophoria see Burkert, *Griechische Religion*, p. 366. For a serpent nymph in Skythia see Hdt. IV, 9–10, which also includes the motif of the [zoostèr] and the bow.

Although the later versions of the Amazon motif are outside the scope of the present study, it is still worth examining them briefly for the light that they throw on the increased prominence of the femininity of the Amazons at the end of the archaic period. To begin with Theseus' abduction of Antiope, it is clear that this motif would be unthinkable without some degree of eroticization of the Amazon motif and an explicit interest in the femininity of the Amazons.[241] Both the earliest Amazon alabastra and the new, contemporary theme of Theseus and Antiope are based on the motif of the erotic abduction of the [parthenos]. The distinction and similarity between the maenad and the [parthenos] are now important, for although both female types are associated with nature and a community of women, the way in which they confront sexuality is different. The maenad is an experienced [gunè] who can surrender to wild practices in her ecstasy but is as such sexually inviolable. The [parthenos] belongs to the domain of Artemis by virtue of her virginity, a domain she is bound to leave (by abduction) through her transformation into a [gunè]. Though the young girls of Attika are about to effect this transition, it is beyond doubt that the Amazons retain the status of [parthenoi]. Both as maenads and as [parthenoi], the Amazons are rendered as female types living in a sphere where their own sexuality may linger, but is not to be put into effect. We may therefore draw the tentative conclusion that the conception of the Amazons as [parthenoi] was not only chronologically but also thematically secondary to the making explicit of their femininity through the association with maenads. Following Vermeule, we may suppose that the different meanings of [damnèmi] were combined to create the motif of Theseus and Antiope. The violation of the sexually inviolable femininity sustaining this conception of the Amazon may help to account for the relatively small success of this motif, which was soon succeeded by the far more successful story of the Athenian Amazonomachy. In any case, the material in question may be taken as a strong indication that the representation of the Amazons as [parthenoi] is an Attic interpretation of the Amazon motif, and that it came into being in the last quarter of the sixth century.[242]

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[241] Cf. also C. Sourvinou-Inwood, "A Series of Erotic Pursuits: Images and Meanings", in *JHS* 107, 1987, pp. 131–153, esp. pp. 138–141 (reissued in *"Reading" Greek Culture*, pp. 58–98).

The other new abduction motif, viz. the theft of the girdle of the Amazon queen, is much more complicated. Klügmann assumed that if the term [zoostèr] was used, this indicated that the object in question was a belt of the type worn by *men*. In that case, the aggressive character of the queen is emphasised, and the heroic aspect of Herakles' feat would lie in his ability to escape from deadly danger unscathed. If, on the other hand, it was referred to as a [zoonè] or [mitra], then the predominant associations were with a female girdle, and the point of the story was an erotic relationship with, or the sexual penetration of, the unapproachable Amazon.[243] In the latter case, the use of the term [zoonè] certainly refers to the discarding of her girdle by the bride on her wedding night, and thus to the loss of virginity and to impregnation, a transitional phase which was the prerogative of Artemis Lysizone or Lysizonos.[244] However, the word [zoonè] is very uncommon;[245] the most regular word for the Amazon's girdle is and remains [zoostèr].[246] According to Klügmann, the dominant motif in this story is that of the fight; he refers to a few later versions, in which not the girdle but the weapons of the queen are the object of Herakles' enterprise. Moreover, he notes the significant detail that there is never any mention of a child (son) born from a union between the Amazon and Herakles—a major distinction between the Herakles and the Theseus versions.[247] Tyrrell, on the other hand, places special emphasis on the sexual aspects of the motif. He resolves the problem of the various meanings of the word "belt" by stating that [zoostèr] and [zoonè] are synonyms: Herakles overcomes the masculine aspect of the Amazon by killing her, and her feminine aspect by taking her girdle by force in an act of symbolic rape.[248] He bases this interpretation on the passage from Apollodoros with which this chapter began. According to Tyrrell, it is impossible to explain why the daughter of Eurystheus would want to possess the queen's girdle if it was a component of her armour, while he considers the value of the girdle as a female attribute to be self-evident in the eyes of Admete.[249]

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[242] Consequently, Tyrrell's qualification of the stories relating to procreation and similar aspects of the Amazonology as typically Athenian is not as self-evident as he would like to believe.

[243] Klügmann, *Amazonen*, p. 14, with a complete list of references to the term [zoostèr].

[244] See e.g. *RE* s.v. Lysizone (Kruse); King, "Bound to Bleed".

[245] Schol. Pind. *Nem.* III, 64, ed. Drachmann [chrusozonoio anassès]; see above, p. 150.

[246] See also K. Schauenburg, "Der Gürtel der Hippolyte", *Philologus* 104, 1960, pp. 1–13; cf. also Klügmann, *Amazonen*, p. 14.

[247] Klügmann, *Amazonen*, p. 14.

Nevertheless, [zoonè] and [zoostèr] are not synonyms. In Homeric epic [zoonè] is primarily the girdle which women wear around their long dresses, which explains why it can also refer to the body or waist of a woman.[250] In Attic, however, this girdle is called a [zoonion], while the [zoonè] is worn by men[251] and can thus stand for the male body. The [zoostèr], on the other hand, is the belt which men wear around their waist to fasten the chiton or as part of their armour.[252] Both kinds of belt may have magical properties, although the [zoonè] is the most important of the two in this respect.[253]

To declare the [zoostèr] to be synonymous with the female [zoonè] is a forced manoeuvre. Moreover, the passage from Apollodoros explicitly states that the Amazon had received the [zoostèr] as a gift from Ares as a sign of her superiority. In this text the girdle is a sign of her capacities as a warrior, not a symbol of the virginity which is to be stolen from the Amazon. If the queen loses this girdle, she loses her mark of royal status and her connection with her father, who is a divinity and an excellent warrior: in other words, she becomes (symbolically) an Amazon like all the rest. Where the girdle refers to her aggressiveness, its loss makes of her a woman like all other women. This indicates an interesting transformation in the Amazon motif: the warrior-like aspect of the Amazon is now represented by the girdle instead of by male [thumos]. This also explains how the theft of this magical object could substitute for the killing of the Amazon herself. In the Apollodoran version, her readiness to cooperate in this transformation from an Amazon into an ordinary woman costs her her life through a trick of Hera.[254] The result in the Apollodoran version is thus the same as in epic: an Amazon who loses her manliness becomes a dead female. In the version of Apollonios, on the other hand, the Amazon does not lose her life at Herakles' hands; she only loses the girdle through trickery. In short, the continuity of the word [zoostèr] in the accounts of Herakles' Ninth Labour is a clear indication that the theme of the theft of the girdle is not a question of sexual violence (rape), but that what is at stake is the Amazons' loss of her warrior-like quality, symbolized by her armour. Besides, when the girdle indicates the internal hierarchy among the Amazons, the motif is equivalent to the acquisition of the mark of royal distinction, comparable to the Persian royal cloak, for instance.[255] What Admete desired was the magical object which embodied the strength and distinction of the Amazon queen, not the symbol of her [partheneia].

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[248] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, p. 91.

[249] Tyrrell, *Amazons*, pp. 90–91.

[250] But cf. *Il.* II, 479, "like Ares for girth [zoonè]". The connection between the male and female meanings is probably the association with the waist.

[251] Xen. *An.* IV, 7, 16. On these meanings of the girdle see *RAC* s.v. "Gürtel" (W. Speyer).

[252] In Homeric epic the [zoo(s)ma] is both a warrior's belt and a kind of loincloth for men, while the [zoostèr] is worn above armour or the chiton; *RAC* s.v. "Gürtel", cf. *RE*, 10A, s.v. "Zoster" (1) (E. Meyer; 1972).

[253] *RAC*, s.v. "Gürtel".

There is one, special moment at which the [zoostèr] could be a properly feminine attribute. It played a part in the Attic initiation of boys and girls to adult status, the ritual process in which the cultural distinction between the sexes is given the most stringent form. In a number of classic articles, J.-P. Vernant has demonstrated how this distinction was based on associations with the mobility of the outside world, contrasted with the closed world of the [oikos]; in functional terms, there is a structural parallel between the introduction of boys to the world of war and the introduction of girls to adulthood through marriage.[256] Although the foundation of this interpretation has remained unshaken, some critics are now also focusing on (ritual) moments and concepts which accentuated the correspondences between masculinity and femininity.[257]

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[254] The story of the theft of the girdle in all its variants can be clearly analysed in accordance with the pattern which Propp devised for narratives of the quest and the acquisition of an object by a hero, *Morphologie du conte*, Paris 1970/2 (original Russian edition, 1928), ch. 3. The influence of the voyage of the Argonauts, which has already been mentioned in connection with the number of participants in Herakles' Ninth Labour, is based on the equivalence of the Golden Fleece and the girdle of the Amazon as magical objects which have to be wrested from their owners in distant and dangerous places. This equivalence is a structural element of the story, but it does not explain the choice of the object itself—in the present case, the girdle.

[255] See H.W.A.M. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, *Yauna en Persai. Grieken en Perzen in een ander perspectief*, diss. Leiden 1980, Ch. II, and p. 170; this symbolic item of clothing is desired by a princess in the Persian accounts.

In this connection, P. Schmitt-Pantel has made some important observations on the symbolic meaning of the girdle.[258] She analyses the special role played by Athena Apatouria in the festival of the same name, which was celebrated in Athens during the month of Pyanepsion (October). This festival marked the recognition of new members of the phratry.[259] Baby boys who had been born during the previous year could be recognised during the Apatouria; membership of a phratry was an essential aspect of male citizenship.[260] Female citizenship, however, was a complicated concept, because women were primarily daughters and subsequently mothers of male citizens, but did not exercise active citizenship themselves.[261] This explains why the Apatouria was a moment of confirmation for women: the goddess Athena presented mothers of their first child with a [zoostèr], which marked them at that moment as Attic citizens. This [zoostèr] thus has a different function from the [zoonè], which is connected with the physical side of procreation, menstruation and childbirth, processes which fell under the sway of Artemis, Hera (to a lesser extent, as the goddess of marriage) and Eileithyia

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[256] J.-P. Vernant, "Hestia—Hermès: sur l'expression religieuse de l'espace et du mouvement chez les Grecs", in idem, *Mythe et pensée chez les Grecs. Etudes de psychologie historique*, Paris 1985/2, pp. 155–201 (original edition, 1963); idem, "La guerre des cités", in idem, *Mythe et société en Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1974, pp. 31–56 (original edition, 1968).

[257] See e.g. Loraux, *Tragic Ways*, pp. 42ff. on the sacrifices of virgin boys and girls; P. Schmitt-Pantel, "Histoire de tyran", in B. Vincent, ed. *Les marginaux et les exclus dans l'histoire*, Paris 1979, pp. 217–231, who shows that marriage is an important aspect of adult status for men as well as for women.

[258] P. Schmitt-Pantel, "Athéna Apatouria et la ceinture: les aspects féminins des Apatouries à Athènes", *AnnESC* 32, 1977, pp. 1059–1073.

[259] For a concise account of the phratry, see Humphreys, "Kinship" pp. 194ff.

[260] The female pendant of the Apatouria as described by Schmitt-Pantel is entirely absent from H.W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians*, London 1977, pp. 88–92, and R. Just, *Women in Athenian Law and Life*, London/New York 1989, but traces of it can be found in L. Gernet, "Frairies antiques", in idem, *Anthropologie de la Grèce antique*, pp. 21–61, esp. pp. 37–45.

[261] On the complicated nature of female citizenship, see Patterson, "*Hai Attikai*: The Other Athenians".

(the goddess of childbirth itself). Athena appears here in the function of Athena Zoostèria, the goddess of the [zoostèr] with which she fastens the waists of young men who have reached adulthood to make them warriors.[262] It should be emphasised that the [zoonè] marks the beginning of this transitional phase for girls, as well as the later moments of marriage and childbirth; it is the final result, the presentation of the wedded mother as an Attic citizen, which is marked by the [zoostèr].

Athena's role at the Apatouria is based on two typical capacities. The goddess guarantees the dress [apatè] of the women who have been recognised as citizens, making use of her inventiveness [mètis], which can assume the character of deceitful appearance as well as the capacity for skilled weaving.[263] These details acquire greater significance if we follow Schmitt-Pantel in her discussion of the correspondences between the [ephebos][264] and the [parthenos]. The myths of Atalante and Kyrene are about [parthenoi] who tried to live as virgin hunters [epheboi] and girded themselves before setting out on an adventure. They still ended up in the role of women and mothers, Atalante after the [apatè] of the golden apples, Kyrene after her abduction by Apollon, which always involves [mètis]. As Schmitt-Pantel stresses, [apatè] and [mètis] crop up in these myths in the structurally indeterminate transitional period between the sexual maturity of the [parthenos] and the moment of marriage and the birth of the first child, a condition which has no full parallel in the maturation of boys.[265]

If we now return to the motif of Herakles' theft of the Amazon's [zoostèr], we may consider the following interpretations.

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[262] Cf. also *RE* 10A s.v. "Zosteria" (1) (E. Meyer).

[263] The goddess also makes use of both these qualities in the creation and presentation of Pandora.

[264] It is interesting to note that, although only attested in a relatively late source (Paus. II, 32, 1ff.), there is a version in which the themes of the myths of Athena Apatouria are associated with Aithra and Bellerophontes (Paus. II, 31, 9), Schmitt-Pantel, "Athéna Apatouria", passim and n. 17. Significant, in my opinion, is the fact that the marriage of Bellerophontes with Aithra does not take place; see above, p. 323ff.

[265] Schmitt-Pantel, "Athéna Apatouria", pp. 1067–1068. On the role of the hunt in the marginal status of the [ephebos] see P. Vidal-Naquet, "Le chasseur noir et l'origine de l'éphébie athénienne", in *Le Chasseur noir*, pp. 151–175, and his later remarks in "The Black Hunter Revisited", *PCPS* 212 (1986), pp. 124–144.

No doubt the [zoostèr] motif reflects the original ambiguity of masculinity and femininity of the Amazons. All the same, it would appear that the masculine side has gained the upper hand, as is suggested, for example, by the context of the passage in Apollodoros.[266] In this respect the motif of the Ninth Labour corresponds to the emphasis on the [andreia] of the Amazons in the epic version, which also gave rise to the story of Herakles and the Amazons. Inasmuch as the [zoostèr] can refer to femininity, I consider the strict meaning, as explained above in connection with Athena Apatouria, to be excluded. Hippolyte could admittedly become a mother, but an association with the status of a married female citizen is in conflict with every aspect of the Amazons that we know. Theseus will have deprived Antiope of her [zoonè] or [zoonion], but Herakles' adventure has no analogy with this meaning of the [zoostèr]. The principal correspondence, then, lies in the [apatè], the aspect of the partly magical, partly social presentation, since the girdle is considered as a mark of Hippolyte's royal status and divine origin. To a lesser extent the motif also indicates the role of [mètis], which is a part of the Ninth Labour connected with theft.[267]

Second, the [zoostèr] implies a striking parallel between the Amazon and Athena herself. Athena Zoostèria, who girds herself for battle, is a virgin goddess dressed as a hoplite, the female emblem of the Greek—Athenian—male warrior. This correspondence between the Amazon and Athena Zoostèria throws special light on the fact that Herakles, like all heroes under Athena's protection, has to take the [zoostèr] from the Amazon. While black-figure vase painting displays an increasing number of cases in which Athena assists Herakles in his labours, her connection with the Amazon motif is limited to a few black-figure items with the Amazonomachy, where she takes part in the scene with chariots.[268] This leads to the conclusion that it was precisely in his fight with the Amazons that Athena failed to provide Herakles with the dependable support and protection which she furnished in all his other exploits. The structural correspondences between the Amazons and Athena themselves may have contributed to this situation.[269]

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[266] Schmitt-Pantel underlines the fact that the hunting [parthenoi] of the Atalante kind are inconceivable as hoplites, "Athèna Apatouria", p. 1067. Though this is correct, it does not apply to the Amazons, who are frequently represented as hoplites. The [zoostèr] is part of the equipment of a hoplite, while the girdle which Atalante puts on (Theognis II, 1290: [zoosamenè]) is presumably a [zoonè] (although the Greek is unclear on this point).

[267] The involvement of Athena in the motif of theft as such may point in this direction. She is conspicuously present on the largest representation of Theseus' rape of Antiope, the fronton of the temple of Apollo Daphnephoros in Eretria, LIMC "Antiope" (II), no. 2; B VIII, nos. 1 and 2, cf. *Amazons*, pp. 125–126. For the debate on a political interpretation of this scene, see my "Patronage and the Pisistratidae".

For the Athenians there was probably only one [parthenos] who could always be girded with this symbol. The fact that Herakles' Amazonomachy decreases in popularity, and the theft of the girdle is entirely absent, in fifth-century Attic art, may indicate that the new version of his Amazon adventure enjoyed a marginal role in Attika, if it featured there at all.[270] In Athens the Amazons were represented as [parthenoi], and thus *par excellence* as figures who would not wear a [zoostèr] in the ritual sense. Besides, the motif of the girdle appears to have replaced the earlier Amazonomachy in the story of Herakles.[271] This released the theme of the battle with the Amazons for a new use. And indeed, it was in Athens that Theseus and the Athenians subjected the Amazonomachy to yet another new interpretation.

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[268] B III, 307, 308, 310, 311. Bothmer takes this iconography to be based on their collaboration in the Gigantomachy, *Amazons*, p. 69.

[269] We have already encountered summary associations of Athena with the Amazons, though in texts dating from a much later period, in the application of the epithet [antianeira] to the goddess and in the alliance between her and the Amazons; the older texts suggest some correlation of the epithet [megathumos], used for men and Athena, with my interpretation of the [thumos] of the Amazons. See above, chs. II and III.

[270] The tragedies of Euripides are evidence for a certain degree of familiarity with the motif.

[271] Boardman, "Herakles, Theseus and Amazons" had already suspected that the motif of the girdle was current in Western and Eastern Greece before it began to circulate on the mainland. I am in total agreement, and would even go further in suggesting that it never became a current motif in Attika at all. Brommer, *Herakles*, p. 37 refers to a fourth-century Campanian vase which, despite the late date, is interesting in this connection because the Amazon is there portrayed handing the girdle over peacefully to Herakles. This item confirms the hypotheses advanced above and is in accord with the literary testimonia, where the theft of the girdle can be seen to replace the Amazonomachy.

CONCLUSIONS

From the late eighteenth century onwards, the rise of historical consciousness implied an ongoing effort to found a science of history. Contesting views were offered on the question of what constituted the object of history and how to arrive at a meaningful interpretation. In the boundless whole of the past, historians delineated a field amenable to the attribution of historical meaning. This significant past became the referent of historiography, and was defined as history. Specific methods, in particular source criticism as developed in philology, were to yield valuable knowledge on historical events and the impact of historical agents. When historians applied their insight into historical conditions to the facts assembled in this way, historical scholarship could explain the forces at work in historical change and show the specific meaning of people and events. Historical understanding was perceived as essential to comprehend the world, and this conviction reshaped all related disciplines, moulding them into a historicizing framework.

History conceived in this way entailed assumptions which in turn showed the limits historical scholarship set itself. Historical understanding and the methods on which it was based privileged rationality as the decisive factor in human behaviour and the human mind. Myth, however, was acknowledged as a rich document of cultural expression whose essence had little to do with rationality. And while the general impact of historicism required myth to be situated in relation to history, the particular quality ascribed to myth denied it an unequivocal ascription to the regular elements of history. Even the source material was seen in an entirely different light. Historiography could perceive its sources as a mimesis of the past, but mythology assumed the sources to present a metamorphosis. The representation of the mythical core in the historical records showed a fractured, contorted reflection at best. It was generally agreed that scholarship could not show the essence of myth in a way similar to showing the significant past.

The problematic relationship of myth to history remained an issue of great concern as long as the historicizing paradigm held sway. Many solutions were offered, none of which gained acceptance for long. Yet a few tendencies continued to shape the parameters of mythological explanation. One entailed the acceptance of a split between the mythical core, held to reside in the past or in the depths of the human mind, and the phenomenology of mythical narrative, intertwined with the texture of history. Linguistics was highly regarded as a method of reaching beyond the surface of extant written documents. A concomitant tendency was the unremitting search for a theory of myth which could account for how the mythopoetic process transformed the core into the extant narrative. By and large, in the nineteenth century the process of history itself was taken to be the formative factor of myth; historical linguistics, and particularly etymology, were considered to provide a valuable method. A retrospective reading of the stages of linguistic development covered the space between the level of regular language in history and the non-linguistic core of myth. In the twentieth century, theories of myth became dominated by social, psychological and epistemological considerations, and the purport of linguistic analysis likewise changed.

The conception of history implied an additional assumption—one of which most scholars were much less aware than they were of the problem of myth. Defining the significant past as the public sphere, the meaning of political power, and the variety of civilized life, history was closely associated with masculinity, a point of view reinforced by the gender of professional historians and the emphasis on rationality. Femininity connotated emotional qualities, enduring social bonds, nature and continuity. Consequently, the relationship of femininity to history was deeply problematic. Femininity preceded or surrounded history, cast as an ahistorical background against which the significant past could be set off. Thus an implicit analogy was fostered between the past, femininity and the core of myth, being a condition of history but not an integrated part of it.

The Amazons presented a paradox to these views of history and myth. As autonomous women warriors, they were reputed to have founded a society of their own, where men were either absent or subservient. Hence the Amazons could not be accommodated in the regular realm of history, where men were unquestionably assumed to be the agents of culture and politics. Nor could they be situated unambiguously in the realm of myth, for whatever origins might be assigned to the core of myth, before it could turn into a Greek myth it had to be assimilated to Greek culture in one way or another. As far as the Amazons were concerned, this was inconceivable. The phenomenology of the myth was felt to reflect a real phenomenon, corroborated by Greek claims that the Amazons really did live somewhere else. Unlike the majority of myths, then, the Amazons were presented as a case of a mythical narrative which was identical with its core. Here, mythological interpretation was a problem, not of translation, but of transmission. Etymology could point the way to the regions outside the Greek world where the Amazons had once lived, or to peoples whose customs erroneously led the Greeks to take them for an Amazonian society.

In brief, while the essence of myth eluded the framework of history, the Amazons eluded the frameworks of both history and myth. As a result, they were assigned a space of their own, a niche carved out from the past, beyond the boundaries of history and myth. As the concerns of historiography and mythology changed over the years, the identity conferred on the realm of the Amazons changed too, but its quality as an outside space remained unaffected. Even when the hold of the historical paradigm on mythology weakened and it came to be replaced by (social) psychology as the explanatory principle of myth, the Amazons could not leave the territory they had inhabited for so long. On the contrary, claims about an Amazonian culture in a prehistorical matriarchal era barred a new exploration of their mythical locale by professional ancient historians for more than a century.

In the 1980s the impact of structuralism reversed the perspective on the Amazons. The myth could now be addressed as a creation by the Greeks themelves, as the ahistorical principles of structuralism discarded the assimilation of the Amazons to the past and searched for their origins in the categories of Greek culture. Yet the assets of structuralist axioms turned out to be drawbacks as well. In subsuming all representations of myth under a single analysis, pointedly in defiance of historical differences, structuralist readings of the Amazons could not come to terms with the changes in the myth over time. The world of classical Athens was presented as the touchstone of the myth par excellence, while the reluctance to examine archaic representations matched the previous embarrassment about the early Amazons as inhabitants of the past. The opposition and hierarchy of male and female which was assumed to underly the Amazon myth could account neither for the fact that fighting the Amazons continued to be a major heroic feat, nor for the value attached to Amazons as founders of Greek cities. Presented unremittingly as the antithesis to Greek values, the Amazons were cast anew in a role defined by exclusion, albeit as a means of integrating their myth into Greek culture. So in spite of the principles involved, in several respects structuralist readings retained the legacy of the earlier interpretations.

When approached as an integrated phenomenon of Greek cultural history, paradox appears at the heart of the Amazon motif again. An analysis of its epic rendering in the *Iliad* reveals that initially the Amazons were hardly more than a name. The noun-epithet formula [Amazones antianeirai] may have been shaped at a very early stage of epic. Epic diction created the ethnic designation [Amazones] out of a non-Greek stem in an organic fit with the exceptional formation [antianeirai]. The tension between the non-Greek origin attributed to the Amazons by virtue of their name and their representation in Greek language and thought defined their mythical existence from the outset.

The most pervasive ambiguity, revealing a tension about sexual difference, was situated at the semantic level of the formula: these women were equivalent to men. This equivalence was a prerequisite for the presentation of the Amazons as opponents in battle. In an ethos which made warfare the heavily borne privilege of men, only women who were [antianeirai] could fight men, and only the Amazons were [antianeirai]. Indeed, the elaboration of the myth showed the Amazons to be respected warriors. Yet this very equivalence underscored the fact that they were not men but women: though as an ethnic designation [Amazones] retained masculine connotations, tradition firmly maintained that they were women, and the grammatical value of [antianeirai] left no doubt about their gender. As women, the Amazons might in principle engage in sexual relations with men, confirming the regular norms of sexual difference which their role as warriors subverted. In brief, the epic formula entailed a constant recasting of masculinity and femininity, rendered as an insoluable paradox in the [Amazones antianeirai].

In the archaic age, "Homeric" epic persisted as the cultural world to which they belonged, and every context in which they were situated exemplified this background. As [antianeirai] warriors, their quality and repute as heroines were beyond doubt. In the purport of the stories, as in the visual representations, they were closely akin to the Trojans: valiant warriors on a par with their Greek counterparts as individuals, though as a group they were bound to lose in the end. The similarities of the opponents was a sine qua non for the rules of fighting and for the renown that was at stake. Heroic death was the high prize of aristocratic masculinity, to be won at an equally high price. It would only result in imperishable fame if the combattants could deem one other worthy of fighting at all. The fact that both parties met at the point of no return forged an even closer identity between the opponents. Which one of two equal warriors was to be victorious lay in the hands of the gods, but they could bring about their decision by affecting the forces in men themselves. In each combattant lurked a weaker, vulnerable, feminine self, unable to live up to the hardships of the duel. If the opponent was to die, this weak sense of self had to be cast off, projected onto the other, turning him into someone who was both similar and different. The Amazons as [antianeirai] heroines represented the problematic ethos of masculine combat, pitched between difference and identity, in tangible, human form. Since only their similarity to men was acceptable on the battlefield, their femininity had to be denied a conscious acknowledgement. Thus the salient difference which made the Amazons the exceptional warriors that tradition reported them to be, and which was the raison d'être of their existence, had to be hidden from view.

If the Amazon paradox could be implied in narrative by linguistic devices, visual artists had to find their own ways of rendering the ambiguities of identity and difference. The heroic similarity between opponents in general is also the basic pattern of the Amazons. Like the Trojans, the Amazons are completely like the Greeks in their weapons and armour, and they are rendered in the generic warfare scenes and duels which commonly feature male combattants. The difference, however, is articulated in various ways: if their femininity was not shown in some way, they would be mistaken for males. Long dresses and visible breasts as feminine characteristics in Geometric style also adorn the first Amazons. Later on the dresses give way to the full hoplite outfit, and in Attic black-figure vase painting the white colour that is regularly used for women's skin is also an attribute distinguishing Amazons from Greek hoplites. Unlike the latter, however, the Amazons are never naked—neither under their armour nor fully naked when dead. The avoidance of nudity is particularly revealing in the case of Penthesileia, the Amazon queen whose heroic death at the hand of Achilles was a major event in the story about them. This feature does not reflect the avoidance of nakedness of women in archaic art, but signifies the heroic concern about the femininity of the Amazons. The naked body of an Amazon would reveal in an embarrassingly unambiguous way that beneath the [antianeira] appearance it was a woman who fought and was slain.

In sum, there is an analogy between feminine grammatical forms at the level of language and the feminine formal attributes at the level of iconography: they both articulate the traditional claim that the Amazons were women. These congruent signs operated in a more or less superficial way; the difference between the Amazons and male warriors could only be allowed to be barely visible. To reveal the physical difference entirely was too much: what meaning was left to be assigned to sexual difference if a warrior [thumos] could be present in male and female bodies alike? Fighting a real female would be an unbearable affront to the masculine warrior ethos.

Yet if combat with an Amazon was heroic because an Amazon was [antianeira], why should this condition be different when she was dead? The story of Achilles and Penthesileia shows why the gender ambiguity present in the Amazons could be faced at the superficial level but became unbearable when they were dead. Thersites, whose role in the epic was precisely to voice what should be left unsaid, slandered Achilles by accusing him of [eroos] for the Amazon queen. His sexual innuendo pointed out her femininity precisely after the queen was slain. Here we should bear in mind that the [thumos] leaves the body at death. As this was the entity where the masculine valour of the Amazons resided, a dead Amazon was just a female corpse. The absence of the naked, dead Penthesileia in the visual record reflects the anxiety about a feminine warrior's turning into a dead female when a masculine hero overcomes her. In this way the Amazons presented yet another paradox for the male heroes who were to fight and kill them: be damned if you do not, and be damned if you do.

In sum, the tension between similarity and difference between heroic opponents, reinforced by the anxiety of masculine identity, was cast in the terms of sexual difference and turned into the image of the Amazons. The multiple paradoxes presented by the Amazons and the inherent impossibility of doing battle with them while leaving masculine honour unscathed explains why the confrontation with the Amazons became a major heroic feat.

A paradoxical image is unstable, never at rest. Though the Amazons represented some of the most vital concerns of Greek society, they were elusive and dim figures. The Greeks therefore engaged in elaborating the motif and filling in the contours. The non-Greek background attributed to the Amazons was specified by various qualities that fleshed out their otherness. Assumed to enter the Greek habitat from a terra incognita beyond Troy, the Amazons were endowed with homelands posited on a map which was cultural before it was geographical. Thrake, whose nature exemplified Penthesileia's origins, was the first case in point, referring to the excessive [thumos] typifying the Thrakians. The visual arts record a shift towards the North in the sixth century, again evoking an atmosphere of foreignness and valour before actually denoting the Skyths living on the northern side of the Euxine. By the early fifth century, Themiskyra on the Thermodon emerged in the written record as the Amazon locality par excellence. It was first conceived as a plain, turning into a city when Hellenistic values increasingly focused on town-centred life. As a compromise between Troy and Skythia, Themiskyra held pride of place for several centuries. When Alexandros the Great crossed the limits of the Greek-speaking world, the Amazons could be taken to pitch camp (or inhabit a city) anywhere beyond its borders.

While their habitat moved along the mental maps of the Greeks, the stories involving the Amazons multiplied. As a motif of exceptional value, the Amazons enhanced the significance of every hero who confronted them. After starting their mythical existence as a non-Greek people, individual Amazons were distinguished in narrative and art and endowed with Greek names referring either to Trojans known from epic or to their qualities as [antianeirai] warriors. Achilles, the epic hero par excellence, was asigned a complete narrative about his dealings with Penthesileia in one of the strands of epic narrative. Penthesileia's name was created both formally and semantically according to the basic tenets of epic, and even seems to reflect Achilles' own role in epic narrative. The poet of the *Iliad*, who probably belonged to a different current, worked the Amazon formula twice into the texture of his story and attributed Amazonomachies to Priamos and Bellerophontes. In both cases, though, the Amazon motif did not fit smoothly into the material, and the text still reveals the stitches where it was inserted. The incongruence of an Amazonomachy with the persona of Priamos and the friction its introduction in the imagined history of Troy effected in the tale as a whole did not pass unnoticed in antiquity. In Bellerophontes' life-story as told in the *Iliad*, the Amazon motif was joined more firmly to the structure of the passage. Nevertheless, the Amazons were an anomaly to the various kinds of Bellerophontes' heroism which the poet had incorporated in the story, and his battle never acquired the significance of other Amazonomachies. Nevertheless, in both cases the *Iliad* reveals the increasing impact of the Amazon motif and the poet's receptivity to current concerns.

Yet another kind of hero who was assigned an Amazonomachy is Herakles. No archaic narrative of this event is extant, but the visual arts indicate that by the late seventh century Herakles and his companions had joined battle with the Amazons. This new feat of Herakles marks a broader effort to connect this hero, who had many properties in common with the natural and bestial world he had to conquer, with the predominantly human world of epic heroism. As in the case of Bellerophontes, the transfer of the Amazon motif to Herakles illustrates both the flexibility of oral narrative and the pervasive influence of "Homeric" epic. In the sixth century, Herakles' Amazonomachy became one of the hero's most popular successes, as witnessed by Attic vase-painting. The epic origins of the Amazon motif account for some striking differences between Herakles' Amazonomachy and his other feats. By the end of the sixth century, Herakles' battle with the Amazons was elaborated in a way that was more in keeping with his other exploits. Now he was sent on a quest to fetch the girdle [zoostèr] of the Amazon queen, an assignment reminiscent of the Argo voyage in sending him and his crew to the remote corners of the expanding Greek world. This new theme emerged among Greeks in the West and the East respectively, eventually to be canonized as the Ninth Labour. In Athens, though, it met with little success, for here only one woman was entitled to wear a girdle denoting masculine valour—Athena, who was [antianeira] herself. Moreover, after the Persian wars Herakles lost ground in Athens as a prominent opponent of the Amazons to Theseus and the Athenians.

By the early sixth century, however, the Amazons were represented in the full latitude of Greek heroism. Their manifold presence invited a further elaboration not only of stories, but of the Amazons themselves as well. This development may also have been the background to their role as eponymous heroines in the cities of Asia Minor (a theme I hope to deal with elsewhere). The visual representations again reveal the gradual changes in the Amazon motif. The urge to fill in the contours, corroborated by the explosive growth of Attic vase production, added to the Amazons' role as respected opponents of Greek warriors an existence of their own. Particularly in connection with Herakles, the epic anxiety about dead Amazons diminished, and there was an increasing interest in the Amazons' femininity. The move to expand the scope of their actions beyond the epic battlefield proper was made possible by associating the Amazons with other females who acted on their own, particularly the maenads. The recurrent connection of Amazon scenes with those of Dionysos and his followers deserves a closer examination than the one presented here. Both themes suggest how the Greek polis conceived of alternative aspects of life which nevertheless belonged to its own culture. The Amazons' similarity to Greek hoplites was transposed to congruent scenes of Amazons donning armour with the help of their mother and returning from the battlefield—seemingly in a space beyond the view of the Greeks, where they lived in an exclusively female society. The exploration of their gender difference accorded with the articulation of their otherness as non-Greeks. Attributes derived from reports on the northern Skythians and assigned to the Amazons suggested where this space might be situated in the cultural geography of barbarian homelands.

In the last decades of the sixth century, the Amazons' otherness was connected with the realm of Artemis, their femininity being understood in the context of Greek views as the condition of [parthenoi]. The first allusion to such a connection had informed the story of Bellerophontes in the *Iliad*, though with as little lasting effect as his Amazonomachy. Now, in the context of a more general curiosity about their sexual condition, the Amazons were aligned with Artemis as the valorous protector of virgins. Yet unlike their Greek counterparts, the Amazons never changed their status of [parthenoi] for that of married [gunaikes]. Although by now they had been provided with a father, Ares was cast in this role to account for their martial nature rather than as a father in the regular Greek sense of the term by interfering on their behalf, least of all by marrying them off. It was taken for granted that the Amazons were not compatible with married life like Greek women. Rather, the new interest in their sexual condition triggered off new elaborations of narratives about them.

The rise of prose, in the form of accounts of history, geography and related topics which at first were hardly distinguished, was based on a critical attitude to mythical narrative. Yet by and large, myth was not completely discarded. Rather, prose writers from ca. 500 B.C. onwards tried to make coherent sense of traditional stories, explaining the inexplicable or straightening out the knotted trajectories of myth. The Amazons in particular became an object of exegesis, for few mythical personae combined so many problematic properties. This knowledge about the Amazons expanded to become a veritable Amazonology. This explained how the existence of the Amazons could be accounted for without hardly ever abandoning belief in their existence altogether. The pleasure in the written word fuelled an extensive array of etymologies, throwing light on the name of the non-Greek Amazons by Greek words in a way which was never open to oral tradition. (Many of these etymologies were revived in the nineteenth century, while the fact that ancient scholars had elucidated the Amazons by this device lent extra authority to its modern variety.) Most poignant, though, were the accounts of how the Amazons as a people could have continued to exist, considering their reputation as an exclusively female people. Taking the epic tradition as a starting point—Homeros himself had testified to the Amazons' existence as [antianeirai]—it was clear that men as warriors were redundant, a fact which surely implied that the Amazons shunned cohabitation with men as well. Yet men had to be involved somewhere in Amazon life, and Amazons had to be sexually active in some way if they were to have any offspring at all. Throughout antiquity and afterwards, Amazonology continued to reflect the concerns of learned authors to solve the Amazon paradox.

At the level of myth proper, the perception of the Amazons as [parthenoi] facilitated the creation of a role for Theseus; both as the slayer of the Minotauros and as an abductor of women, he had more in common with the original Herakles than with epic heroism. Now he set out to rape an Amazon, an exploit that overtly privileged the sexual aspect of the Amazons above their role as warriors. In the course of the fifth century, the rape of Antiope was discarded in favour of a different story. The Amazons had invaded Attika in revenge for Antiope, and in the ensuing battle the Amazons appeared again as formidable warriors, to be justly overcome by the Athenians under the leadership of Theseus. Apart from the fact that the rape of a woman, and a virgin warrior in particular, was hardly compatible with the consistent efforts in the early fifth century to upgrade Theseus and turn him into the patron hero of democratic Athens, the lack of success of the Antiope story harks back to the main purport of the Amazon motif. The mythical narrative was still too intertwined with its epic background, underscoring the [antianeira] quality of the Amazons in battle as the main constituent of its capacity to mark heroic value. More glory was to be gained from successful combat with the Amazons than from having sexual relations with them. Nor was it a coincidence that the story of the Amazon invasion of Attika, eclipsing the Antiope version, emerged after the Persian invasion. The unmistakable analogy between the Amazons and the Persians in classical Athenian representations expressed feelings of triumph at the defeat of the mighty adversary, and of surprise at having achieved this at all. The citizen forces of Athens now claimed the place of the aristocratic heroes of epic in their striving for imperishable fame. It was only more than a century later, when citizen armies were increasingly supplanted by mercenary forces, that the the warrior quality of the Amazons was overshadowed by their femininity. The Amazon queen Thalestris came to Alexandros not to fight him, but to have offspring with him. Even Achilles and Penthesileia turned into a pair of lovers, separated by battle but reunited after death. The Amazon paradox, which in archaic epic could only elicit acute anguish, had changed into a symbol of hope and harmony.

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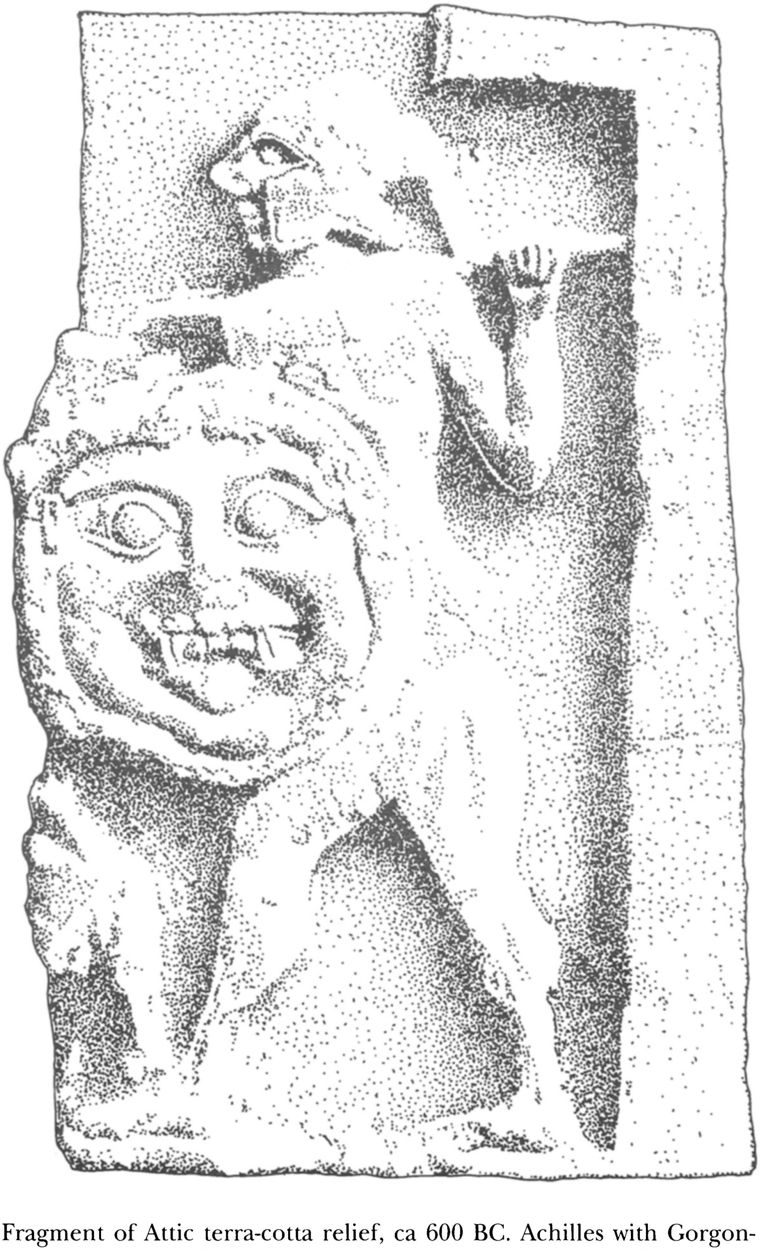
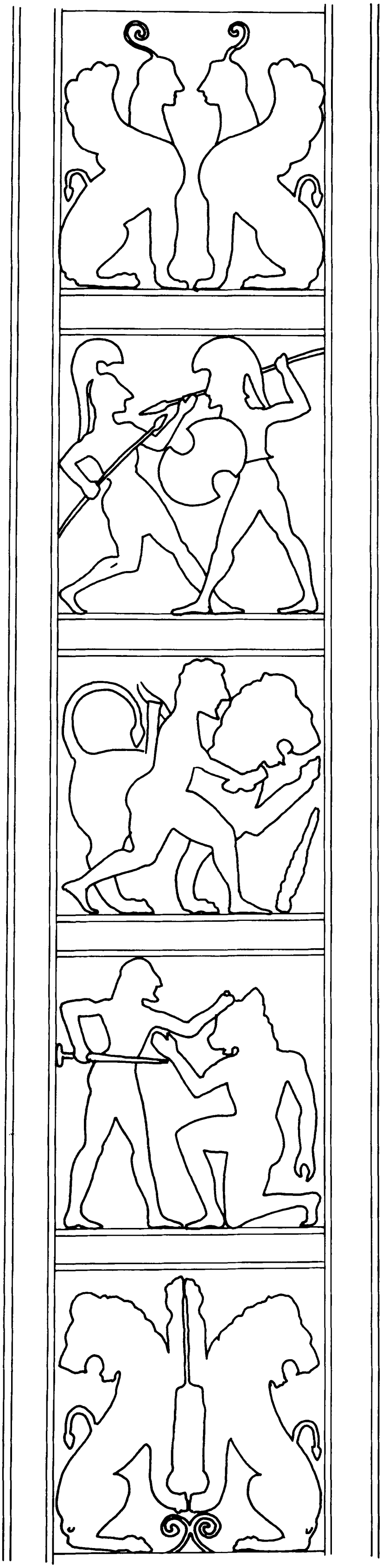
PLATES

1



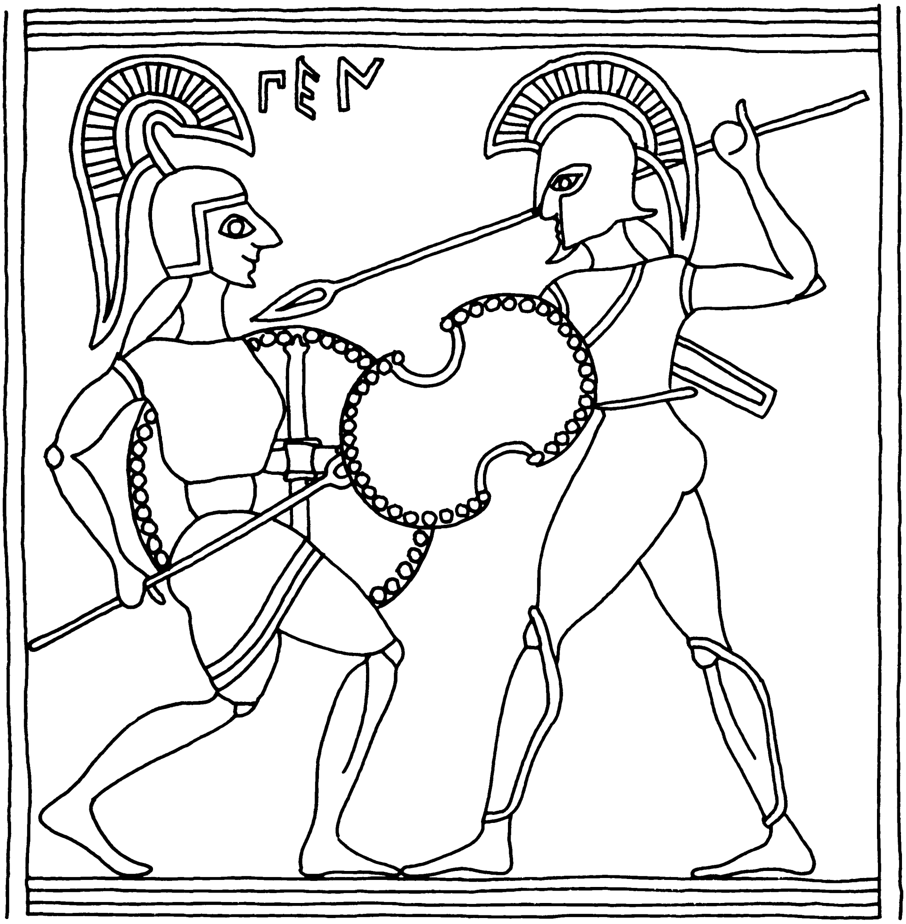
Fragment of Attic terra-cotta relief, ca 600 BC. Achilles with Gorgon-shield; fragment of a figure on the ground. Inscription (barely legible): Ainia. Drawing after Bothmer, *Amazons in Greek Art,* I, 3. (Penthesileia no. 2)



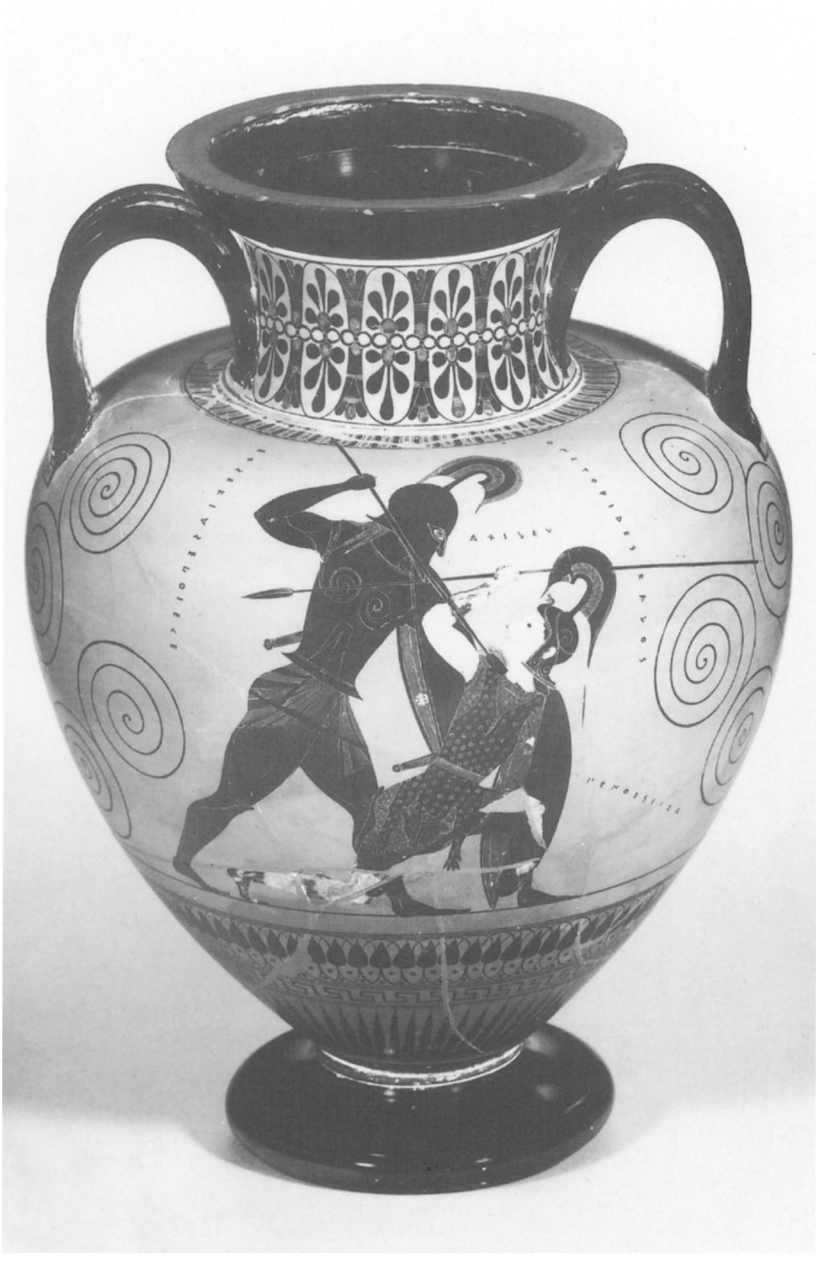
2a

Bronze reliefs on leather shield-strip; Argive, late 7th century BC. From top to bottom: antithetic sphinxes, Achilles and Penthesileia, Herakles and the Lion, Theseus and the Minotauros, double lions. Drawing after reconstruction of matrix by Kunze, *Archaische Schildbänder* no. VI.
(Penthesileia no. 4)

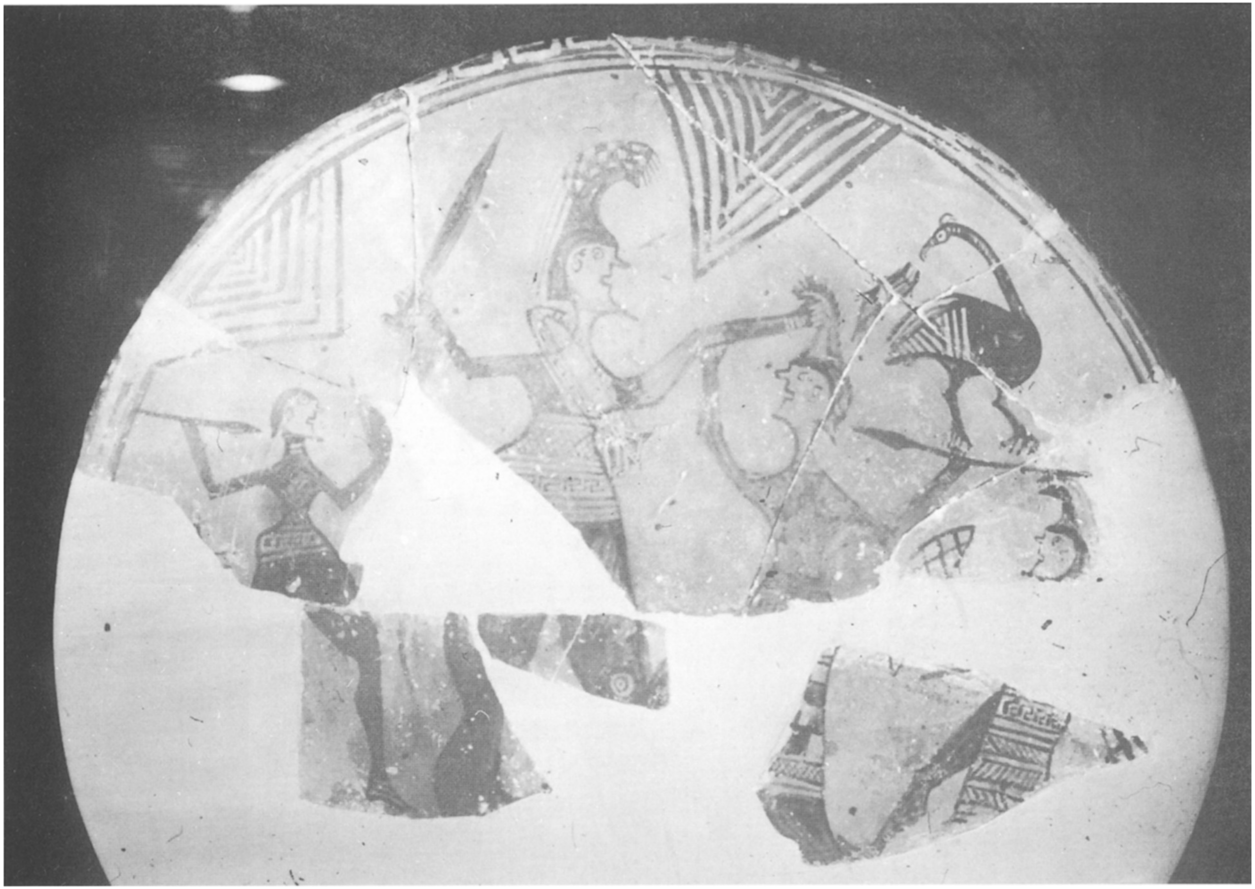
2b



Bronze relief on leather shield-strip; Argive, second quarter of 6th century BC. Duel of Achilles and Penthesileia. Inscription: PEN. Drawing after Kunze, *Archaische Schildbänder* no. XXXII b.
(Penthesileia no. 7b)

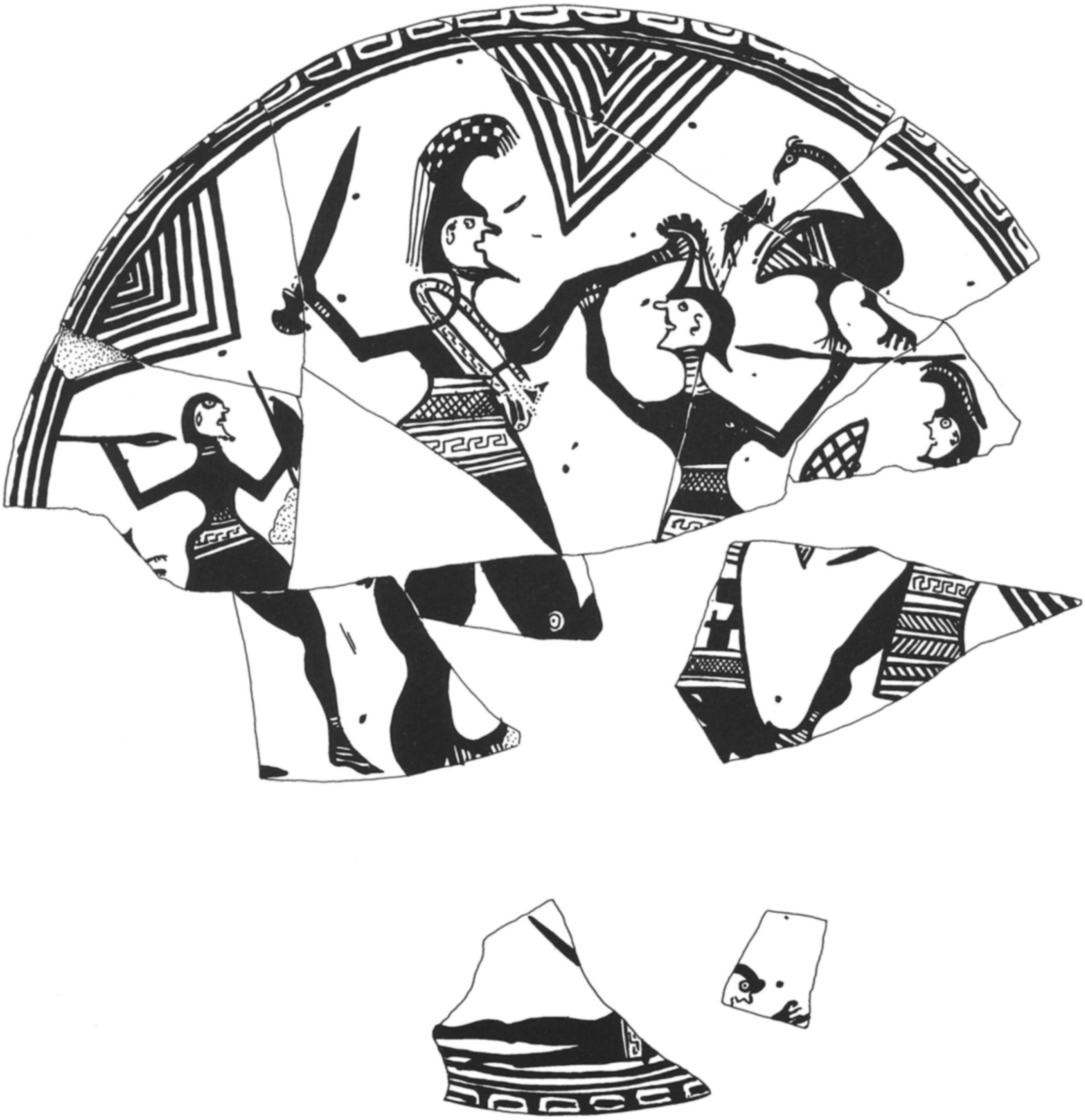


Attic black-figure neck-amphora, by Exekias, ca. 530 BC. Duel of Achilles and Penthesileia. Inscriptions: Achileu, Penthesilea. On the reverse, Dionysos and Oinopion. Signed by Exekias as potter. Courtesy, the Trustees of the British Museum.
(Penthesileia no. 1)



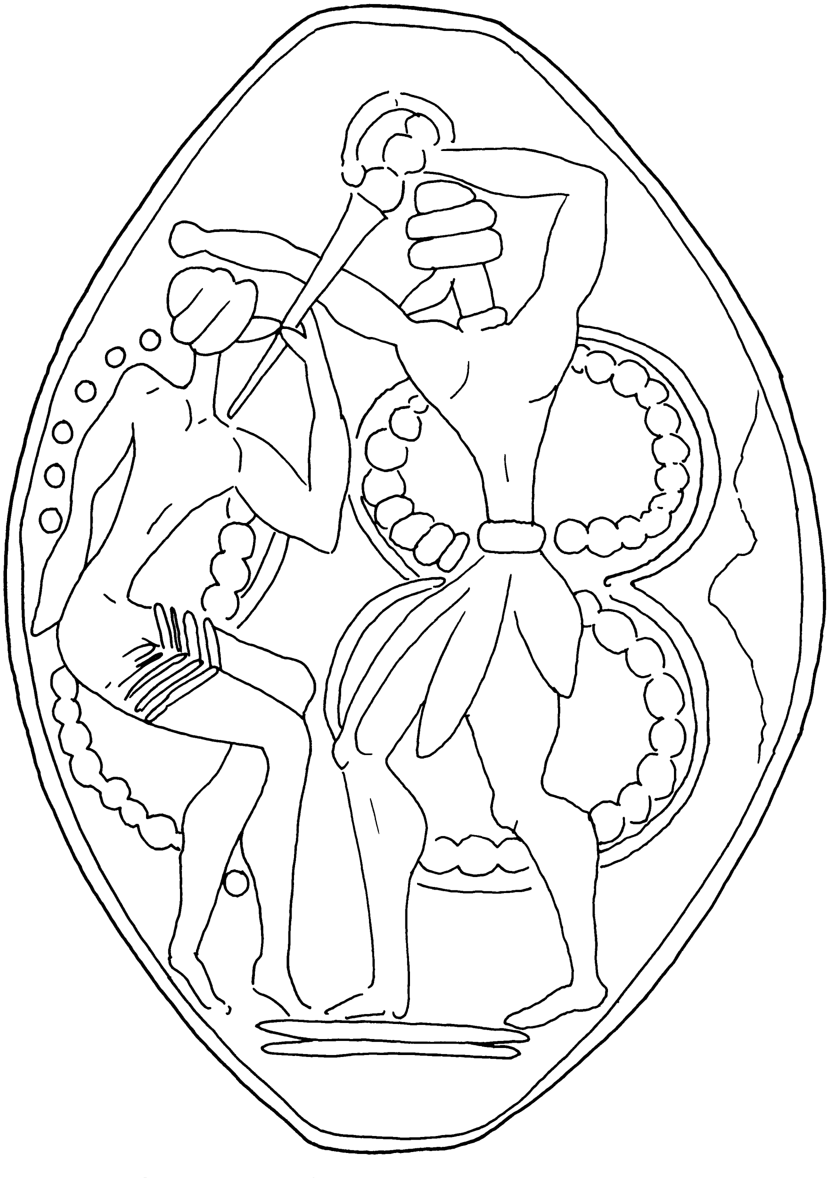
Votive shield found in Tiryns, ca. 700 BC. Generic Amazonomachy; on the reverse, hunting horse-man. Detail: Amazonomachy, upper part. Courtesy, Museum Nauplia.
(Early Amazons no. 1)

4b

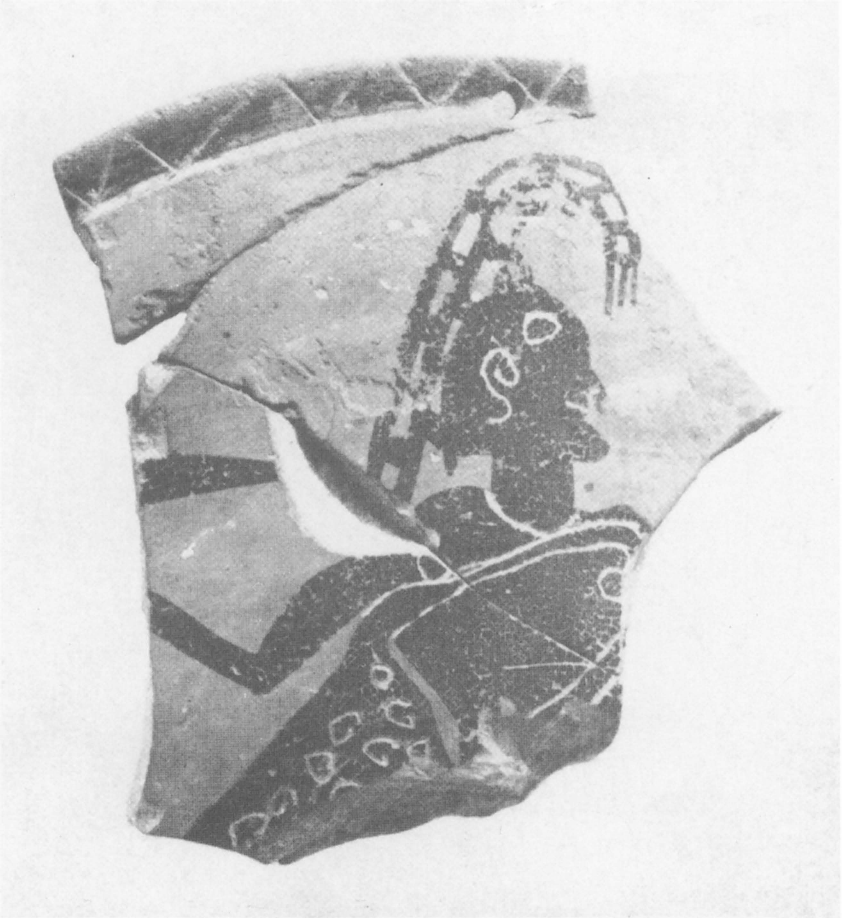


Votive shield found in Tyrins; ca. 700 BC. Amazonomachy. Drawing after extant fragments.
(Early Amazons no. 1)

5

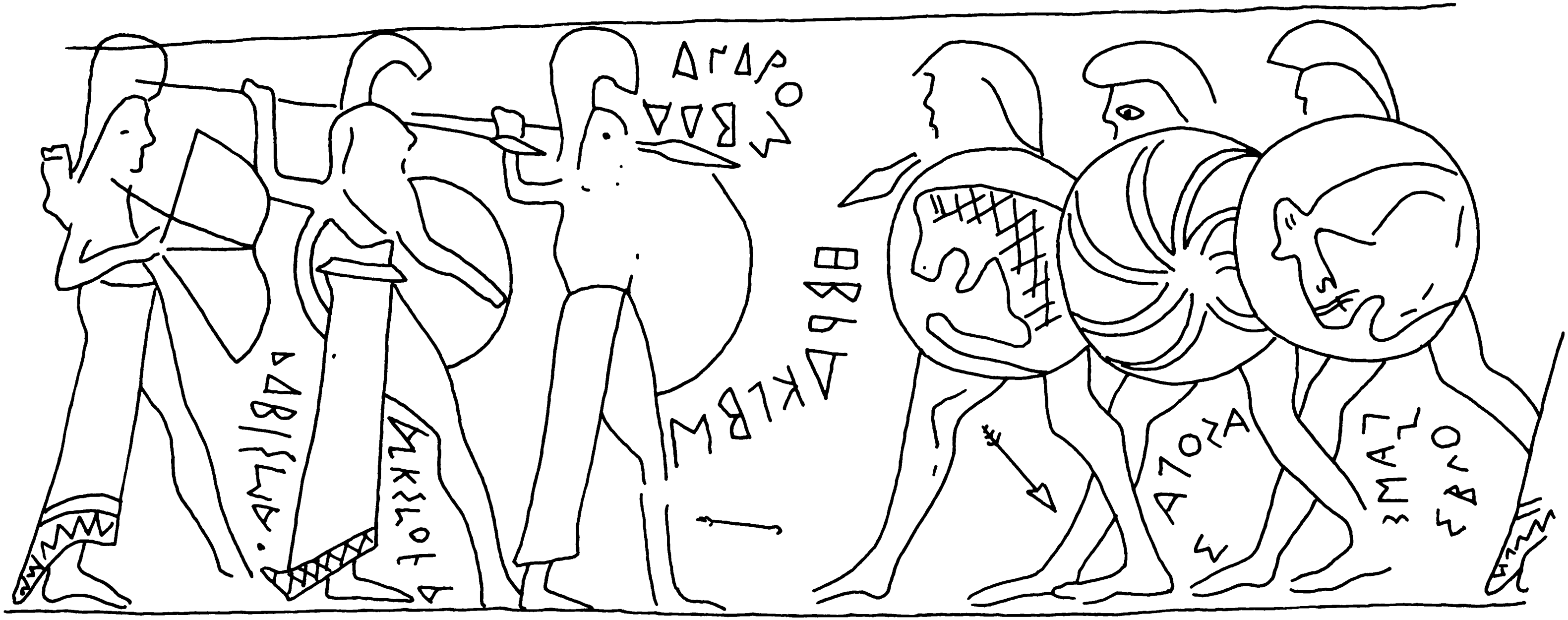


Signet-ring, from Mykenai, shaft-grave III. Drawing after Ahlberg, *Fighting on Land and Sea*, fig. 71. Impression shows the gesture from left to right. Cf. *CMS* I, no. 12, p. 23.

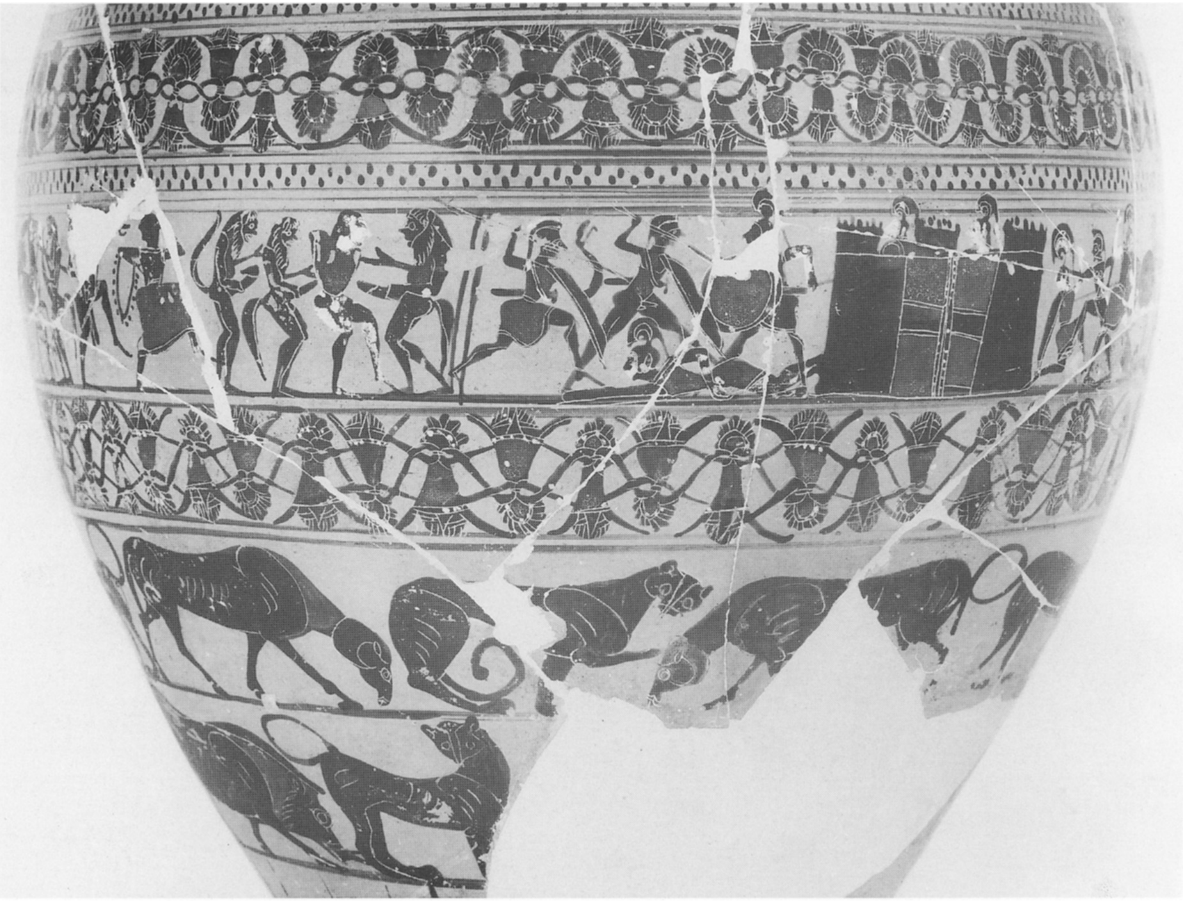


Fragment of votive shield, from Samos, ca. 700 BC. Photograph after Eilmann, *AM* 1933, Beilage XXXVII.
(Early Amazons no. 2)

7

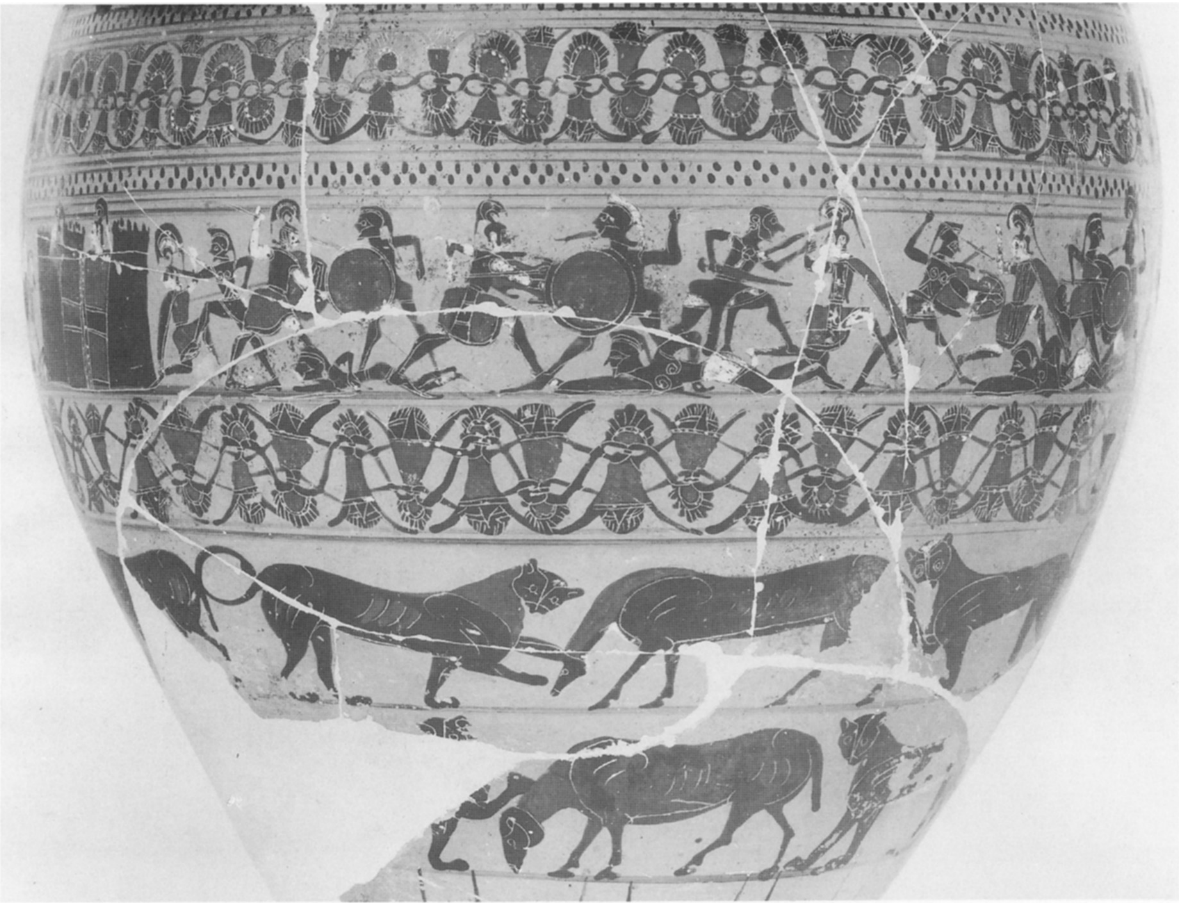


Early Corinthian alabastron, end of 7th century BC. Amazonomachy of Herakles and companions. Inscriptions: Andromeda, Alkinoa, Areximacha (?), Herakles, Iolaos, Pasimelon. Drawing after De Ridder, *RUM* 1896, and Brommer, *Herakles*, pl. 8. (Early Amazons no. 3)

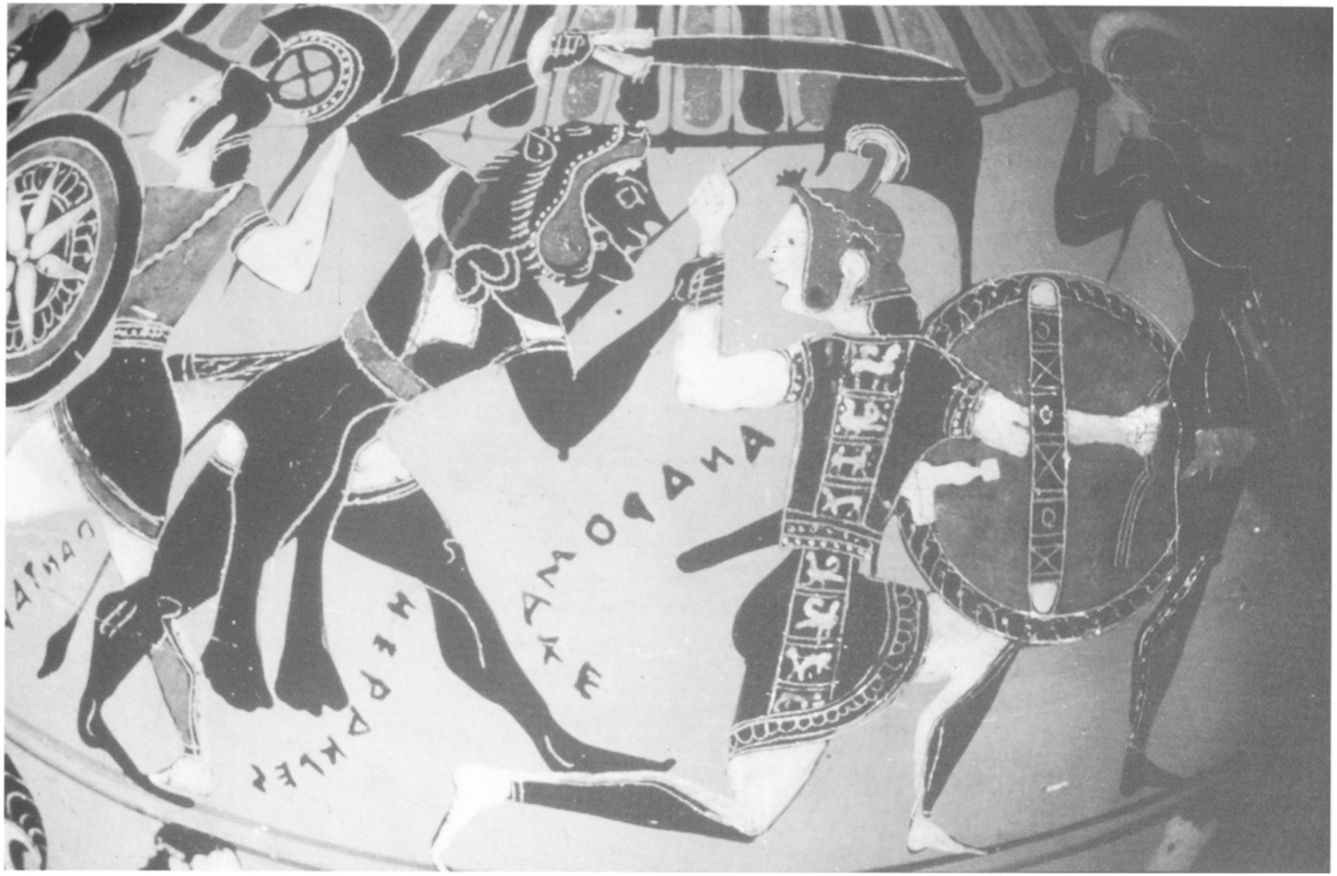


‘‘Tyrrhenian’’ Attic black-figure neck-amphora, by the Castellani Painter, second quarter of the 6th century BC. Amazonomachy of Herakles and companions. Detail: walled city with three towers. On the left, satyrs and maenads. Courtesy: Museo Archeologico Etrusco, Florence.

8b



"Tyrrhenian" Attic black-figure neck-amphora, by the Castellani Painter, second quarter of the 6th century BC. Amazonomachy of Herakles and companions. Detail: duel of Herakles and Amazon.



Attic black-figure amphora, by the Timiades Painter, ca. 570–560 BC. Side A: Herakles and Greeks fighting Amazons; side B: dancing men between two swans. Detail: duel of Herakles and Amazon. Inscriptions: Timiades, Pantariste, Herakles, Andromache, Telamon, Ainipe. H.L. Pierce Fund; courtesy: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

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